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THE Way of the World.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE

In *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*,

BY

His MAJESTY'S Servants.

Written by Mr. *CONGREVE*.

Audire est Operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui Mœchis non vultis—— Hor. Sat. 2. l. 1.
——*Metuat doti deprensa.*—— Ibid.

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LONDON:

PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mr. *Betterton*.

OF those few Fools, who with Ill Stars are curs'd,
Sure scribbling Fools, call'd Poets, fare the worst.
For they're a sort of Fools which Fortune *makes,*
And after she has made 'em Fools, forsakes.
With Nature's *Oafs 'tis quite a diff'rent Case,*
For Fortune *favours all her* Idiot-Race.
In her own Nest the Cuckow-Eggs *we find,*
O'er which she broods to hatch the Changling-Kind.
No Portion *for her own she has to spare,*
So much she doats on her adopted Care.
Poets are Bubbles, by the Town drawn in,
Suffer'd at first some trifling Stakes to win:
But what unequal Hazards do they run!
Each time they write, they venture all they've won:
The Squire that's butter'd still, is sure to be undone.
This Author, heretofore, has found your Favour,
But pleads no Merit from his past Behaviour.
To build on that might prove a vain Presumption,
Should Grants to Poets made, admit Resumption.
And in Parnassus *he must lose his Seat,*
If that be found a forfeited Estate.
He owns, with Toil, he wrought the following Scenes,
But if they're naught ne'er spare him for his Pains:
Damn him the more; have no Commiseration
For Dulness on mature Deliberation.
He swears he'll not resent one hiss'd off Scene,
Nor, like those peevish Wits, his Play maintain,
Who, to assert their Sense, your Taste arraign.

Some Plot we think he has, and some new Thought;
Some Humour too, no Farce; but that's a Fault.
Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect,
For so Reform'd a Town, who dares Correct?
To Please, this time, has been his sole Pretence,
He'll not instruct, lest it should give Offence.
Should he by chance a Knave or Fool expose,
That hurts none here, sure here are none of those.
In short, our Play, shall (with your leave to shew it)
Give you one Instance of a Passive Poet.
Who to your Judgments yields all Resignation;
So Save or Damn, after your own Discretion.

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. *Bracegirdle.*

After our Epilogue *this Crowd dismisses,*
I'm thinking how this Play'll be pull'd to Pieces.
But pray, consider, e'er you doom its Fall,
How hard a thing 'twould be to please you all.
There are some Criticks so with Spleen diseas'd,
They scarcely come inclining to be Pleas'd:
And sure he must have more than mortal Skill,
Who pleases any one against his Will.
Then, all bad Poets we are sure are Foes,
And how their Number's swell'd the Town well knows:
In shoals, I've mark'd 'em judging in the Pit;
Tho' they're on no Pretence for Judgment fit
But that they have been Damn'd for want of Wit.
Since when, they by their own Offences taught
Set up for Spies on Plays, and finding Fault.
Others there are whose Malice we'd prevent;
Such, who watch Plays with scurrilous Intent
To mark out who by Characters *are meant.*

And

And tho' no perfect Likeneſs they can trace;
Yet each pretends to know the Copy'd Face.
Theſe, with falſe Gloſſes feed their own ill Nature,
And turn to Libel, *what was meant a* Satire.
May ſuch malicious Fops *this* Fortune *find,*
To think themſelves alone the Fools *deſign'd:*
If any are ſo arrogantly Vain,
To think they ſingly can ſupport a Scene,
And furniſh Fool *enough to entertain.*
For well the Learn'd and the Judicious know,
That Satire *ſcorns to ſtoop ſo meanly low,*
As any one abſtracted Fop *to ſhow.*
For, as when Painters form a matchleſs Face,
They from each Fair One *catch ſome different Grace;*
And ſhining Features in one Portrait blend,
To which no ſingle Beauty muſt pretend:
So Poets oft, do in one Piece expoſe
Whole Belles Aſſembles *of* Coquets *and* Beaux.

Perſonæ Dramatis.

MEN.

Fainall, In Love with Mrs *Marwood*.	Mr. *Betterton*.
Mirabell, In Love with Mrs. *Millamant*.	Mr. *Verbruggen*.
Witwoud, Followers of Mrs. *Millamant*.	Mr *Bowen*.
Petulant, Followers of Mrs. *Millamant*.	Mr. *Bowman*.
Sir *Wilfull Witwoud*, Half Brother to *Witwoud*, and Nephew to Lady *Wiſhfort*.	Mr. *Underhill*.
Waitwell, Servant to *Mirabell*.	Mr. *Bright*.

WOMEN.

Lady *Wiſhfort*, Enemy to *Mirabell*, for having falſly pretended Love to her.	Mrs. *Leigh*.
Mrs. *Millamant*, A fine Lady, Niece to Lady *Wiſhfort*, and loves *Mirabell*.	Mrs. *Bracegirdle*.
Mrs. *Marwood*, Friend to Mr. *Fainall*, and likes *Mirabell*.	Mrs. *Barry*.
Mrs. *Fainall*, Daughter to Lady *Wiſhfort*, and Wife to *Fainall*, formerly Friend to *Mirabell*.	Mrs. *Bowman*.
Foible, Woman to Lady *Wiſhfort*.	Mrs. *Willis*.
Mincing, Woman to Mrs. *Millamant*.	Mrs. *Prince*.

Dancers, Footmen, *and* Attendants.

SCENE *LONDON*.

The Time equal to that of the Preſentation.

THE

THE Way of the World.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Chocolate-House.

Mirabell *and* Fainall *[Rising from Cards.]* Betty *waiting.*

Mira. YOU are a fortunate Man, Mr. *Fainall.*

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you pleaſe. I'll play on to entertain you.

Fain. No, I'll give you your Revenge another time, when you are not ſo indifferent; you are thinking of ſomething elſe now, and play too negligently; the Coldneſs of a loſing Gameſter leſſens the Pleaſure of the Winner: I'd no more play with a Man that ſlighted his ill Fortune, than I'd make Love to a Woman who undervalu'd the Loſs of her Reputation.

Mira. You have a Taſte extreamly delicate, and are for refining on your Pleaſures.

Fain. Prithee, why ſo reſerv'd? Something has put you out of Humour.

Mira. Not at all: I happen to be grave to Day; and you are gay; that's all.

Fain. Confeſs, *Millamant* and you quarrell'd laſt Night, after I left you; my fair Couſin has ſome Humours that would tempt the Patience of a Stoick. What, ſome Coxcomb came in, and was well-receiv'd by her, while you were by.

Mira. *Witwoud* and *Petulant*; and what was worſe, her

her Aunt, your Wife's Mother, my evil Genius; or to ſum up all in her own Name, my old Lady *Wiſhfort* came in.——

Fain. O there it is then —— She has a laſting Paſſion for you, and with Reaſon. —— What, then my Wife was there?

Mira. Yes, and Mrs. *Marwood* and Three or Four more, whom I never ſaw before; ſeeing me, they all put on their grave Faces, whiſper'd one another; then complain'd aloud of the Vapours, and after fell into a profound Silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mira. For which Reaſon I reſolv'd not to ſtir. At laſt the good old Lady broke thro' her painful Taciturnity, with an Invective againſt long Viſits. I would not have underſtood her, but *Millamant* joining in the Argument, I roſe and with a conſtrain'd Smile told her, I thought nothing was ſo eaſie as to know when a Viſit began to be troubleſome; ſhe reden'd and I withdrew, without expecting her Reply.

Fain. You were to blame to reſent what ſhe ſpoke only in Compliance with her Aunt.

Mira. She is more Miſtreſs of her ſelf, than to be under the neceſſity of ſuch a Reſignation.

Fain. What? tho' half her Fortune depends upon her Marrying with my Lady's Approbation?

Mira. I was then in ſuch a Humour, that I ſhou'd have been better pleas'd if ſhe had been leſs diſcreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; laſt Night was one of their Cabal-Nights; they have 'em three times a Week, and meet by turns, at one another's Apartments, where they come together like the Coroner's Inqueſt, to ſit upon the murder'd Reputations of the Week. You and I are excluded; and it was once propos'd that all the Male Sex ſhou'd be excepted; but ſome body mov'd that to avoid Scandal there might be one Man of the Community; upon which Motion *Witmould* and *Petulant* were enroll'd Members.

Mira. And who may have been the Foundreſs of this Sect? My Lady *Wiſhfort*, I warrant, who publiſhes her De-

Deteſtation of Mankind; and full of the Vigour of Fifty five, declares for a Friend and *Ratafia*; and let Poſterity ſhift for it ſelf, ſhe'll breed no more.

Fain. The Diſcovery of your ſham Addreſſes to her, to conceal your Love to her Neice, has provok'd this Separation: Had you diſſembl'd better, Things might have continu'd in the State of Nature.

Mira. I did as much as Man cou'd, with any reaſonable Conſcience; I proceeded to the very laſt Act of Flattery with her, and was guilty of a Song in her Commendation: Nay, I got a Friend to put her into a Lampoon, and complement her with the Imputation of an Affair with a young Fellow, which I carry'd ſo far, that I told her the malicious Town took notice that ſhe was grown fat of a ſudden, and when ſhe lay in of a Dropſie, perſuaded her ſhe was reported to be in Labour. The Devil's in't, if an Old Woman is to be flatter'd further, unleſs a Man ſhou'd endeavour downright perſonally to debauch her; and that my Virtue forbad me. But for the Diſcovery of this Amour, I am indebted to your Friend, or your Wife's Friend, Mrs. *Marwood*.

Fain. What ſhould provoke her to be your Enemy, without ſhe has made you Advances, which you have ſlighted? Women do not eaſily forgive Omiſſions of that Nature.

Mira. She was always civil to me, 'till of late; I confeſs I am not one of thoſe Coxcombs who are apt to interpret a Woman's good Manners to her Prejudice; and think that ſhe who does not refuſe 'em ev'ry thing, can refuſe 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant Man, *Mirabell*; and tho' you may have Cruelty enough, not to ſatisfie a Lady's longing; you have too much Generoſity, not to be tender of her Honour. Yet you ſpeak with an Indifference which ſeems to be affected; and confeſſes you are conſcious of a Negligence.

Mira. You purſue the Argument with a Diſtruſt that ſeems to be unaffected, and confeſſes you are conſcious of a Concern for which the Lady is more indebted to you than your Wife.

Fain. Fie, fie Friend, if you grow Cenſorious I muſt leave you; ——I'll look upon the Gameſters in the next Room.

Mira. Who are they?

Fain. *Petulant* and *Witwoud.* ——Bring me ſome Chocolate. [*Exit.*

Mira. *Betty*, what ſays your Clock?

Bet. Turn'd of the laſt Canonical Hour, Sir. [*Exit.*

Mira. How pertinently the Jade anſwers me! Ha? almoſt one a Clock! [*Looking on his Watch.*] O, y'are come——

Enter a Servant.

Well; is the grand Affair over? You have been ſomething tedious.

Serv. Sir, there's ſuch Coupling at *Pancras*, that they ſtand behind one another, as 'twere in a Country Dance. Ours was the laſt Couple to lead up; and no Hopes appearing of diſpatch, beſides, the Parſon growing hoarſe, we were afraid his Lungs would have fail'd before it came to our Turn; ſo we drove round to *Duke's-Place*; and there they were rivetted in a Trice.

Mira. So, ſo, you are ſure they are Married.

Serv. Married and Bedded, Sir: I am Witneſs.

Mira. Have you the Certificate?

Serv. Here it is, Sir.

Mira. Has the Taylor brought *Waitwell*'s Cloaths home, and the new Liveries?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Mira. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the Conſummation 'till farther Order; bid *Waitwell* ſhake his Ears, and Dame *Partlet* ruffle up her Feathers, and meet me at One a Clock by *Roſamond's* Pond; that I may ſee her before ſhe returns to her Lady; And as you tender your Ears be ſecret.

[*Exit Servant.*

Re-Enter Fainall.

Fain. Joy of your Succeſs, *Mirabell*; you look pleas'd.

Mira. Ay; I have been engag'd in a Matter of ſome ſort of Mirth, which is not yet ripe for Diſcovery. I am glad this is not a Cabal-Night. I wonder, *Fainall*, that

that you who are Married, and of Conſequence ſhould be diſcreet, will ſuffer your Wife to be of ſuch a Party.

Fain. Faith, I am not Jealous. Beſides, moſt who are engag'd are Women and Relations; and for the Men, they are of a Kind too Contemptible to give Scandal.

Mira. I am of another Opinion. The greater the Coxcomb, always the more the Scandal: For a Woman who is not a Fool, can have but one Reaſon for aſſociating with a Man that is.

Fain. Are you Jealous as often as you ſee *Witwoud* entertain'd by *Millamant*?

Mira. Of her Underſtanding I am, if not of her Perſon.

Fain. You do her wrong; for to give her her Due, ſhe has Wit.

Mira. She has Beauty enough to make any Man think ſo; and Complaiſance enough not to contradict him who ſhall tell her ſo.

Fain. For a paſſionate Lover, methinks you are a Man ſomewhat too diſcerning in the Failings of your Miſtreſs.

Mira. And for a diſcerning Man, ſomewhat too paſſionate a Lover; for I like her with all her Faults; nay, like her for her Faults. Her Follies are ſo natural, or ſo artful, that they become her; and thoſe Affectations which in another Woman wou'd be odious, ſerve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, *Fainall*, ſhe once us'd me with that Inſolence, that in Revenge I took her to pieces; ſifted her and ſeparated her Failings; I ſtudy'd 'em, and got 'em by Rote. The Catalogue was ſo large, that I was not without Hopes, one Day or other to hate her heartily: To which end I ſo us'd my ſelf to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my Deſign and Expectation, they gave me ev'ry Hour leſs and leſs Diſturbance; 'till in a few Days it became habitual to me, to remember 'em without being diſpleas'd. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own Frailties; and in all probability in a little time longer I ſhall like 'em as well.

Fain.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her Charms, as you are with her Defects, and my Life on't, you are your own Man again.

Mira. Say you ſo?

Fain. I, I, I have Experience: I have a Wife, and ſo forth.

Enter Meſſenger.

Meſſ. Is one Squire *Witwoud* here?

Bet. Yes; What's your Buſineſs?

Meſſ. I have a Letter for him, from his Brother Sir *Wilfull*, which I am charg'd to deliver into his own Hands.

Bet. He's in the next Room, Friend —— That way. [*Exit Meſſ.*

Mira. What. is the chief of that Noble Family in Town, Sir *Wilfull Witwoud?*

Fain. He is expected to Day. Do you know him?

Mira. I have ſeen him, he promiſes to be an extraordinary Perſon; I think you have the Honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half Brother to this *Witwoud* by a former Wife, who was Siſter to my Lady *Wiſhfort*, my Wife's Mother. If you Marry *Millamant* you muſt call Couſins too.

Mira. I had rather be his Relation than his Acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to Town in order to Equip himſelf for Travel.

Mira. For Travel! Why the Man that I mean is above Forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the Honour of *England*, that all *Europe* ſhould know we have Blockheads of all Ages.

Mira. I wonder there is not an Act of Parliament to ſave the Credit of the Nation, and prohibit the Exportation of Fools.

Fain. By no means, 'tis better as 'tis; 'tis better to Trade with a little Loſs, than to be quite eaten up, with being overſtock'd.

Mira. Pray, are the Follies of this Knight-Errant, and thoſe of the Squire his Brother, any thing related?

Fain.

Fain. Not at all; *Witwoud* grows by the Knight, like a Medlar grafted on a Crab. One will melt in your Mouth, and t'other set your Teeth on Edge; one is all Pulp, and the other all Core.

Mira. So one will be Rotten before he be Ripe, and the other will be Rotten without ever being Ripe at all.

Fain. Sir *Wilfull* is an odd Mixture of Bashfulness and Obstinacy. —— But when he's Drunk, he's as loving as the Monster in the Tempest, and much after the same manner. To give the t'other his due; he has something of good Nature, and does not always want Wit.

Mira. Not always; but as often as his Memory fails him, and his common Place of Comparisons. He is a Fool with a good Memory, and some few Scraps of other Folks Wit. He is one whose Conversation can never be approv'd, yet it is now and then to be endur'd. He has indeed one good Quality, he is not Exceptious; for he so passionately affects the Reputation of understanding Raillery, that he will construe an Affront into a Jest; and call downright Rudeness and ill Language, Satire and Fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finish his Picture; you have an Opportunity to do it at full length. Behold the Original.

—— *Enter* Witwoud.

Wit. Afford me your Compassion, my Dears; pity me, *Fainall*, *Mirabell*, pity me.

Mira. I do from my Soul.

Fain. Why, what's the Matter?

Wit. No Letters for me, *Betty*?

Bet. Did not the Messenger bring you one but now, Sir?

Wit. Ay, but no other?

Bet. No, Sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard; —— A Messenger, a Mule, a Beast of Burden, he has brought me a Letter from the Fool my Brother, as heavy as a Panegyrick in a Funeral Sermon, or a Copy of Commendatory Verses from one Poet to another. And what's worse,

worſe, 'tis as ſure a Fore-runner of the Author, as an Epiſtle Dedicatory.

Mira. A Fool, and your Brother, *Witwoud!*

Wit. Ay, ay, my half Brother. My half Brother he is, no nearer upon Honour.

Mira. Then 'tis poſſible he may be but half a Fool.

Wit. Good, good *Mirabell, le Drole!* Good, good, hang him, don't let's talk of him; —— *Fainall*, how does your Lady? Gad, I ſay any thing in the World to get this Fellow out of my Head. I beg Pardon that I ſhou'd ask a Man of Pleaſure, and the Town, a Queſtion at once ſo Foreign and Domeſtick. But I Talk like an old Maid at a Marriage, I don't know what I ſay: But ſhe's the beſt Woman in the World.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you ſay, or elſe your Commendation wou'd go near to make me either Vain or Jealous.

Wit. No Man in Town lives well with a Wife but *Fainall*: Your Judgment *Mirabell.*

Mira. You had better ſtep and ask his Wife; if you wou'd be credibly inform'd.

Wit. Mirabell.

Mira. Ay.

Wit. My Dear, I ask Ten Thouſand Pardons; —— Gad I have forgot what I was going to ſay to you.

Mira. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but prithee excuſe me, —— my Memory is ſuch a Memory.

Mira. Have a care of ſuch Apologies, *Witwoud*; —— for I never knew a Fool but he affected to complain, either of the Spleen or his Memory.

Fain. What have you done with *Petulant*?

Wit. He's reckoning his Mony, —— my Mony it was —— I have no Luck to Day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at Play; — for you are ſure to be too hard for him at Repartee: Since you monopolize the Wit that is between you, the Fortune muſt be his of Courſe.

Mira. I don't find that *Petulant* confeſſes the Superiority of Wit to be your Talent, *Witwoud.*

Wit. Come, come, you are Malicious now, and wou'd breed

breed Debates. ——*Petulant*'s my Friend, and a very honeſt Fellow, and a very pretty Fellow, and has a ſmattering——Faith and Troth a pretty deal of an odd ſort of a ſmall Wit: Nay, I'll do him Juſtice. I'm his Friend, I won't wrong him neither. ——And if he had but any Judgment in the World, ——he wou'd not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the Merits of my Friend.

Fain. You don't take your Friend to be over-nicely bred.

Wit. No, no, hang him, the Rogue has no Manners at all, that I muſt own——No more Breeding than a Bum-baily, that I grant you,——'Tis pity faith; the Fellow has Fire and Life.

Mira. What, Courage?

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that, ——I can't ſay as to that.——Yes, faith, in a Controverſie he'll contradict any Body.

Mira. Tho' 'twere a Man whom he fear'd, or a Woman whom he lov'd.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he ſpeaks; ——We have all our Failings; you are too hard upon him, you are faith. Let me excuſe him,——I can defend moſt of his Faults, except one or two; one he has, that's the Truth on't, if he were my Brother, I cou'd not acquit him——That indeed I cou'd wiſh were otherwiſe.

Mira. Ay marry, what's that, *Witwoud*?

Wit. O pardon me——Expoſe the Infirmities of my Friend.——No, my Dear, excuſe me there.

Fain. What I warrant he's unſincere, or 'tis ſome ſuch Trifle.

Wit. No, no, what if he be? 'Tis no matter for that, his Wit will excuſe that: A Wit ſhou'd no more be ſincere, than a Woman conſtant; one argues a Decay of Parts, as t'other of Beauty.

Mira. May be you think him too poſitive?

Wit. No, no, his being poſitive is an Incentive to Argument, and keeps up Converſation.

Fain. Too illiterate.

Wit. That! that's his Happineſs ——His want of Learning,

Learning, gives him the more Opportunities to ſhew his natural Parts.

Mira. He wants Words.

Wit. Ay; but I like him for that now; for his want of Words gives me the Pleaſure very often to explain his Meaning.

Fain. He's Impudent.

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mira. Vain.

Wit. No.

Mira. What, he ſpeaks unſeaſonable Truths ſometimes, becauſe he has not Wit enough to invent an Evaſion.

Wit. Truths! Ha, ha, ha! No, no, ſince you will have it,—— I mean, he never ſpeaks Truth at all,—— That's all. He will lie like a Chambermaid, or a Woman of Quality's Porter. Now that is a Fault.

Enter Coachman.

Coach. Is Maſter *Petulant* here, Miſtreſs?

Bet. Yes.

Coach. Three Gentlewomen in the Coach would ſpeak with him.

Fain. O brave *Petulant*, Three!

Bet. I'll tell him.

Coach. You muſt bring Two Diſhes of Chocolate and a Glaſs of Cinnamon-water. [*Exit.*

Wit. That ſhould be for Two faſting Strumpets, and a Bawd troubled with Wind. Now you may know what the Three are.

Mira. You are very free with your Friend's Acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, Friendſhip without Freedom is as dull as Love without Enjoyment, or Wine without Toaſting; but to tell you a Secret, theſe are Trulls that he allows Coach-hire, and ſomething more by the Week, to call on him once a Day at publick Places.

Mira. How!

Wit. You ſhall ſee he won't go to 'em becauſe there's no more Company here to take notice of him.—— Why this is nothing to what he us'd to do.—— Before he found out this way, I have known him call for himſelf——

Fain.

Fain. Call for himself? What dost thou mean?

Wit. Mean, why he wou'd slip you out of this Chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him —As soon as your Back was turn'd —— Whip he was gone; ——Then trip to his Lodging, clap on a Hood and Scarf, and Mask, flap into a Hackney-Coach, and drive hither to the Door again in a trice; where he wou'd send in for himself, that I mean, call for himself, wait for himself, nay, and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a Letter for himself.

Mira. I confess this is something extraordinary —— I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a coming; O I ask his Pardon.

Enter Petulant.

Bet. Sir, the Coach stays.

Pet. Well, well; I come —— 'Sbud a Man had as good be a profess'd Midwife as a profess'd Whoremaster, at this rate; to be knock'd up and rais'd at all Hours, and in all Places. Pox on 'em I won't come. —D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come —— Let 'em snivel and cry their Hearts out.

Fain. You are very cruel, *Petulant.*

Pet. All's one, let it pass —— I have a Humour to be cruel. ——

Mira. I hope they are not Persons of Condition that you use at this rate.

Pet. Condition, Condition's a dry'd Fig, if I am not in Humour —— By this Hand, if they were your —— a ——a ——your What-dee-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off, if I want Appetite.

Mira. What-dee-call-'ems! What are they, *Witwoud*?

Wit. Empresses, my Dear —— By your What-dee-call-'ems he means Sultana Queens.

Pet. Ay, *Roxolana's.*

Mira. Cry you Mercy.

Fain. Witwoud says they are ——

Pet. What does he say th'are?

Wit. I, fine Ladies I say.

Pet. Pass on, *Witwoud* —— Harkee, by this Light his Relations —— Two Coheiresses his Cousins, and an old Aunt, that loves Catterwauling better than a Conventicle.

Wit.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha; I had a Mind to see how the Rogue would come off—— Ha, ha, ha; Gad I can't be angry with him; if he said they were my Mother and my Sisters.

Mira. No!

Wit. No; the Rogue's Wit and Readiness of Invention charm me, dear *Petulant*.

Bet. They are gone, Sir, in great Anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps Complexion, saves Paint.

Fain. This Continence is all dissembled; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes Court to *Millamant*, and swear he has abandon'd the whole Sex for her Sake.

Mira. Have you not left off your impudent Pretensions there yet? I shall cut your Throat, sometime or other *Petulant*, about that Business.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that pass——There are other Throats to be cut——

Mira. Meaning mine, Sir?

Pet. Not I——I mean no Body——I know nothing——But there are Uncles and Nephews in the World——And they may be Rivals——What then? All's one for that——

Mira. How! Harkee *Petulant*, come hither——Explain, or I shall call your Interpreter.

Pet. Explain, I know nothing——Why you have an Uncle, have you not, lately come to Town, and lodges by my Lady *Wishfort*'s?

Mira. True.

Pet. Why that's enough——You and he are not Friends; and if he shou'd marry and have a Child, you may be disinherited, ha?

Mira. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this Truth?

Pet. All's one for that; why then say I know something.

Mira Come, thou art an honest Fellow *Petulant*, and shalt make Love to my Mistress, thou shalt, Faith. What hast thou heard of my Uncle?

Pet. I, nothing I. If Throats are to be cut, let Swords clash; snugs the Word, I shrug and am silent.

Mira.

Mira. O Raillery, Raillery. Come, I know thou art in the Womens Secrets—— What you're a Cabaliſt, I know you ſtaid at *Millamant*'s laſt Night, after I went. Was there any Mention made of my Uncle, or me? Tell me; if thou hadſt but good Nature equal to thy Wit *Petulant*, *Tony Witwoud*, who is now thy Competitor in Fame, wou'd ſhew as dim by thee as a dead Whiting's Eye, by a Pearl of Orient; he wou'd no more be ſeen by thee, than *Mercury* is by the Sun: Come, I'm ſure thou wo't tell me.

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common Senſe then, for the future?

Mira. Faith I'll do what I can for thee; and I'll pray that Heaven may grant it thee in the mean time.

Pet. Well, harkee.

Fain. *Petulant* and you both will find *Mirabell* as warm a Rival as a Lover.

Wit. Pſhaw, pſhaw, that ſhe laughs at *Petulant* is plain. And for my part——But that it is almoſt a Faſhion to admire her, I ſhou'd——Harkee——To tell you a Secret, but let it go no further——Between Friends, I ſhall never break my Heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handſome; but ſhe's a ſort of an uncertain Woman.

Fain. I thought you had dy'd for her.

Wit. Umh——No——

Fain. She has Wit.

Wit. 'Tis what ſhe will hardly allow any Body elſe——Now, Demme, I ſhou'd hate that, if ſhe were as handſome as *Cleopatra*. *Mirabell* is not ſo ſure of her as he thinks for.

Fain. Why do you think ſo?

Wit. We ſtaid pretty late there laſt Night, and heard ſomething of an Uncle to *Mirabell*, who is lately come to Town,—— and is between him and the beſt part of his Eſtate; *Mirabell* and he are at ſome Diſtance, as my Lady *Wiſhfort* has been told; and you know ſhe hates *Mirabell*, worſe than a Quaker hates a Parrot, or than a Fiſhmonger hates a hard Froſt. Whether this Uncle has ſeen Mrs. *Millamant* or not, I cannot ſay; but

but there were Items of ſuch a Treaty being in Embrio; and if it ſhou'd come to Life, poor *Mirabell* wou'd be in ſome ſort unfortunately robb'd i'faith.

Fain. 'Tis impoſſible *Millamant* ſhould harken to it.

Wit. Faith, my Dear, I can't tell; ſhe's a Woman, and a kind of a Humoriſt.

Mira. And this is the Sum of what you cou'd collect laſt Night.

Pet. The Quinteſſence. May be *Witwoud* knows more, he ſtay'd longer——Beſides they never mind him; they ſay any thing before him.

Mira. I thought you had been the greateſt Favourite.

Pet. Ay *teſte a teſte*; But not in publick, becauſe I make Remarks.

Mira. Do you.

Pet. Ay, ay, pox I'm malicious, Man. Now he's ſoft you know, they are not in awe of him——The Fellow's well bred, he's what you call a——What d'ye-call-'em. A fine Gentleman, but he's ſilly withall.

Mira. I thank you, I know as much as my Curioſity requires. *Fainall*, Are you for the *Mall*?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a Turn before Dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park, the Ladies talk'd of being there.

Mira. I thought you were obliged to watch for your Brother Sir *Wilful*'s Arrival.

Wit. No, no, he comes to his Aunt's, my Lady *Wiſtful*; pox on him, I ſhall be troubled with him too; what ſhall I do with the Fool?

Pet. Beg him for his Eſtate; that I may beg you afterwards; and ſo have but one Trouble with you both.

Wit. O rare *Petulant*; thou art as quick as a Fire in a froſty Morning; thou ſhalt to the *Mall* with us; and we'll be very ſevere.

Pet. Enough, I'm in a Humour to be ſevere.

Mira. Are you; Pray then walk by your ſelves——Let not us be acceſſary to your putting the Ladies out of Countenance, with your ſenſleſs Ribaldry; which you roar out aloud as often as they paſs by you; and when you have made a handſom Woman bluſh, then you think you have been ſevere.

Pet.

Pet. What, what? Then let 'em either ſhew their Innocence by not underſtanding what they hear, or elſe ſhew their Diſcretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to underſtand.

Mira. But haſt not thou then Senſe enough to know that thou ought'ſt to be moſt aſham'd thy ſelf, when thou haſt put another out of Countenance.

Pet. Not I, by this Hand——I always take Bluſhing either for a Sign of Guilt, or ill Breeding.

Mira. I confeſs you ought to think ſo. You are in the right, that you may plead the Error of your Judgment in defence of your Practice.

Where Modeſty's ill Manners, 'tis but fit
That Impudence and Malice paſs for Wit.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

St. James's *Park.*

Enter Mrs. Fainall *and Mrs.* Marwood.

Mrs. *Fain.* AY, ay, dear *Marwood*, if we will be happy, we muſt find the Means in our ſelves, and among our ſelves. Men are ever in Extreams; either doating or averſe. While they are Lovers, if they have Fire and Senſe, their Jealouſies are inſupportable: And when they ceaſe to Love, (we ought to think at leaſt) they loath; they look upon us with Horror and Diſtaſte; they meet us like the Ghoſts of what we were, and as ſuch fly from us.

Mrs. *Mar.* True, 'tis an unhappy Circumſtance of Life, that Love ſhou'd ever die before us; and that the Man ſo often ſhou'd out-live the Lover. But ſay what you will, 'tis better to be left, than never to have been lov'd. To paſs our Youth in dull Indifference, to refuſe the Sweets of Life, becauſe they once muſt leave us

us; is as preposterous, as to wish to have been bo Old, because we one Day must be Old. For my pa my Youth may wear and waste, but it shall never r in my Possession.

Mrs. *Fain.* Then it seems you dissemble an Aversio to Mankind, only in compliance with my Mother's Hu mour.

Mrs. *Mar.* Certainly. To be free; I have no Tas of those insipid dry Discourses, with which our Sex force must entertain themselves, apart from Men. W may affect Endearments to each other, profess eterna Friendships, and seem to dote like Lovers; but 'tis no in our Natures long to persevere. Love will resume h Empire in our Breasts, and every Heart, or soon or lat receive and readmit him as its lawful Tyrant.

Mrs. *Fain.* Bless me, how have I been deceiv'd Why you profess a Libertine.

Mrs. *Mar.* You see my Friendship by my Freedom Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your Sentiment agree with mine.

Mrs. *Fain.* Never.

Mrs. *Mar.* You hate Mankind.

Mrs. *Fain.* Heartily, Inveterately.

Mrs. *Mar.* Your Husband.

Mrs. *Fain.* Most transcendently; ay, tho' I say it meritoriously.

Mrs. *Mar.* Give me your Hand upon it.

Mrs. *Fain.* There.

Mrs. *Mar.* I join with you; what I have said has been to try you.

Mrs. *Fain.* Is it possible? Dost thou hate those Vi-pers Men?

Mrs. *Mar.* I have done hating 'em; and am now come to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

Mrs. *Fain.* There spoke the Spirit of an *Amazon*, a *Penthesilea*.

Mrs. *Mar.* And yet I am thinking sometimes, to carry my Aversion further.

Mrs. *Fain.* How?

Mrs. *Mar.* Faith by Marrying; if I cou'd but find one

one that lov'd me very well, and would be throughly ſenſible of ill Uſage; I think I ſhou'd do my ſelf the Violence of undergoing the Ceremony.

Mrs. *Fain.* You would not make him a Cuckold?

Mrs. *Mar.* No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

Mrs. *Fain.* Why had not you as good do it?

Mrs. *Mar.* O if he ſhou'd ever diſcover it, he wou'd then know the worſt; and be out of his Pain; but I wou'd have him ever to continue upon the Rack of Fear and Jealouſie.

Mrs. *Fain.* Ingenious Miſchief! Wou'd thou were married to *Mirabell.*

Mrs. *Mar.* Wou'd I were.

Mrs. *Fain.* You change Colour.

Mrs. *Mar.* Becauſe I hate him.

Mrs. *Fain.* So do I; but I can hear him nam'd. But what Reaſon have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs. *Mar.* I never lov'd him; he is, and always was inſufferably proud.

Mrs. *Fain.* By the Reaſon you give for your Averſion, one wou'd think it diſſembl'd; for you have laid a Fault to his Charge, of which his Enemies muſt acquit him.

Mrs. *Mar.* O then it ſeems you are one of his favourable Enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.

Mrs. *Fain.* Do I? I think I am a little ſick o' the ſudden.

Mrs. *Mar.* What ails you?

Mrs. *Fain.* My Husband. Don't you ſee him? He turn'd ſhort upon me unawares, and has almoſt overcome me.

Enter Fainall *and* Mirabell.

Mrs. *Mar.* Ha, ha, ha; he comes opportunely for you.

Mrs. *Fain.* For you, for he has brought *Mirabell* with him.

Fain. My Dear.

Mrs. *Fain.* My Soul.

Fain. You don't look well to Day, Child.

Mrs. *Fain.* D'ye think ſo?

Mira.

Mira. He is the only Man that do's, Madam.

Mrs. *Fain.* The only Man that would tell me so at least; and the only man from whom I could hear it without mortification.

Fain. O my Dear I am satisfy'd of your Tenderness I know you cannot resent any thing from me; especially what is an effect of my Concern.

Mrs. *Fain.* Mr. *Mirabell*, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant Relation last Night; I wou'd fain hear it out.

Mira. The Persons concern'd in that Affair, have yet a tolerable Reputation ——I am afraid Mr. *Fainall* will be Censorious.

Mrs. *Fain.* He has a Humour more prevailing than his Curiosity, and will willingly dispence with the hearing of one scandalous Story, to avoid giving an Occasion to make another by being seen to walk with his Wife. This way Mr. *Mirabell*, and I dare promise you will oblige us both.

[*Exeunt Mrs.* Fainall *and* Mirabell.

Fain. Excellent Creature! Well sure if I shou'd live to be rid of my Wife, I shou'd be a miserable man.

Mrs. *Mar.* Ay!

Fain. For having only that one Hope, the accomplishment of it, of Consequence must put an End to all my Hopes; and what a Wretch is he who must survive his Hopes! Nothing remains when that Day comes, but to sit down and weep like *Alexander*, when he wanted other Worlds to conquer.

Mrs. *Mar.* Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. Faith, I think not.

Mrs. *Mar.* Pray let us; I have a Reason.

Fain. You are not Jealous?

Mrs. *Mar.* Of whom?

Fain. Of *Mirabell*.

Mrs. *Mar.* If I am, is it inconsistent with my Love to you that I am tender of your Honour?

Fain. You wou'd intimate then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my Wife and him.

Mrs. *Mar.* I think she does not hate him to that degree she wou'd be thought.

Fain.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too Inſenſible.

Mrs. *Mar.* It may be you are deceiv'd.

Fain. It may be ſo. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mrs. *Mar.* What?

Fain. That I have been deceiv'd Madam, & you are falſe.

Mrs. *Mar.* That I am falſe! What mean you?

Fain. To let you know I ſee through all your little Arts —— Come, you both love him; and both have equally diſſembl'd your Averſion. Your mutual Jealouſies of one another, have made you claſh 'till you have both ſtruck Fire. I have ſeen the warm Confeſſion redning on your Cheeks, and ſparkling from your Eyes.

Mrs. *Mar.* You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not —— 'Twas for my eaſe to overſee and wilfully neglect the groſs Advances made him by my Wife; that by permitting her to be engag'd, I might continue unſuſpected in my Pleaſures; and take you oftner to my Arms in full Security. But cou'd you think becauſe the nodding Huſband would not wake, that e'er the watchful Lover ſlept!

Mrs. *Mar.* And wherewithal can you reproach me?

Fain. With Infidelity, with loving of another, with Love of *Mirabell.*

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Tis falſe. I challenge you to ſhew an Inſtance that can confirm your groundleſs Accuſation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is inſenſible, and your Reſentment follows his Neglect. An Inſtance? The Injuries you have done him are a Proof of your interpoſing in his Love. What cauſe had you to make Diſcoveries of his pretended Paſſion? To undeceive the credulous Aunt, and be the officious Obſtacle of his Match with *Millamant*?

Mrs. *Mar.* My Obligations to my Lady urg'd me: I had profeſs'd a Friendſhip to her; and could not ſee poor unſuſpecting Nature ſo abus'd by that Diſſembler.

Fain. What, was it Conſcience then! Profeſs'd a Friendſhip! O the pious Friendſhips of the Female Sex!

Mrs. *Mar.* More tender, more ſincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty Vows of men, whether profeſſing Love to us, or mutual Faith to one another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha; you are my Wife's Friend too.

Mrs. *Mar.* Shame and Ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me! Have I been falſe to her, thro' ſtrict Fidelity to you, and ſacrific'd my Friendſhip to keep my Love inviolate? And have you the Faſeneſs to charge me with the Guilt, unmindful of the Merit! To you it ſhou'd be meritorious, that I have been vicious. And do you reflect that Guilt upon me, which ſhould lie buried in your Boſom?

Fain. You miſinterpret my Reproof. I meant but to remind you of the ſlight Account you once could make of ſtricteſt Ties, when ſet in Competition with your Love to me.

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Tis falſe, you urg'd it with deliberate Malice——'Twas ſpoke in ſcorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your Guilt, not your Reſentment, begets your Rage. If yet you lov'd, you could forgive a Jealouſie: But you are ſtung to find you are diſcover'd.

Mrs. *Mar.* It ſhall be all diſcover'd. You too ſhall be diſcover'd; be ſure you ſhall. I can but be expos'd ——If I do it my ſelf I ſhall prevent your Baſeneſs.

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mrs. *Mar.* Diſcloſe it to your Wife; own what has paſt between us.

Fain. Frenzy!

Mrs. *Mar.* By all my Wrongs I'll do't——I'll publiſh to the World the Injuries you have done me, both in my Fame and Fortune: With both I truſted you, you Bankrupt in Honour, as indigent of Wealth.

Fain. Your Fame I have preſerv'd. Your Fortune has been beſtow'd as the Prodigality of your Love would have it, in Pleaſures which we both have ſhar'd. Yet had not you been falſe, I had e'er this repaid it——'Tis true——had you permitted *Mirabell* with *Millamant* to have ſtoll'n their marriage, my Lady had been incens'd beyond all Means of Reconcilement: *Millamant* had forfeited the Moiety of her Fortune; which then wou'd have deſcended to my Wife; ——And wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful Prize of a rich Widow's Wealth, and ſquander it on Love and you?

Mrs.

Mrs. *Mar.* Deceit and frivolous Pretence.

Fain. Death, am I not married? What's Pretence? Am I not Impriſon'd, Fetter'd? Have I not a Wife? Nay a Wife that was a Widow, a young Widow, a handſome Widow; and would be again a Widow, but that I have a Heart of Proof, and ſomething of a Conſtitution to buſtle thro' the Ways of Wedlock and this World. Will you yet be reconcil'd to Truth and me?

Mrs. *Mar.* Impoſſible. Truth and you are inconſiſtent — I hate you, and ſhall for ever.

Fain. For loving you?

Mrs. *Mar.* I loath the Name of Love after ſuch Uſage; and next to the Guilt with which you wou'd aſperſe me, I ſcorn you moſt. Farewell.

Fain. Nay, we muſt not part thus.

Mrs. *Mar.* Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm ſorry.

Mrs. *Mar.* I care not — Let me go — Break my Hands, do — I'd leave 'em to get looſe.

Fain. I would not hurt you for the World. Have I no other Hold to keep you here?

Mrs. *Mar.* Well, I have deſerv'd it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mrs. *Mar.* Poor diſſembling! — O that — Well, it is not yet ——.

Fain. What? What is it not? What is it not yet? It is not yet too late —

Mrs. *Mar.* No, it is not yet too late — I have that Comfort.

Fain. It is to love another.

Mrs. *Mar.* But not to loath, deteſt, abhor Mankind, my ſelf and the whole Treacherous World.

Fain. Nay, this is Extravagance — Come I ask your Pardon — No Tears — I was to blame, I cou'd not love you and be eaſie in my Doubts — Pray forbear — I believe you; I'm convinc'd I have done you wrong; and any way, ev'ry way will make amends; — I'll hate my Wife yet more, Damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all ſhe's worth, and will retire ſomewhere, any where to another World, I'll marry thee — Be pacify'd — 'Sdeath they come, hide your Face, your Tears — You have a maſk, wear it a mo-

ment. This way, this way, be perſuaded. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mirabell *and Mrs.* Fainall.

Mrs. *Fain.* They are here yet.

Mira. They are turning into the other Walk.

Mrs. *Fain.* While I only hated my Husband, I could bear to ſee him, but ſince I have deſpis'd him, he's too offenſive.

Mira. O you ſhould hate with Prudence.

Mrs. *Fain.* Yes, for I have lov'd with Indiſcretion.

Mira. You ſhou'd have juſt ſo much Diſguſt for your Husband, as may be ſufficient to make you reliſh your Lover.

Mrs. *Fain.* You have been the Cauſe that I have lov'd without Bounds, and wou'd you ſet Limits to that Averſion, of which you have been the Occaſion? Why did you make me marry this Man?

Mira. Why do we daily commit diſagreeable and dangerous Actions? To ſave that Idol Reputation. If the Familiarities of our Loves had produc'd that Conſequence, of which you were apprehenſive, where could you have fix'd a Father's Name with Credit, but on a Husband? I knew *Fainall* to be a Man laviſh of his Morals, an intereſted and profeſſing Friend, a falſe and a deſigning Lover; yet one whoſe Wit and outward fair Behaviour, have gain'd a Reputation with the Town, enough to make that Woman ſtand excus'd, who has ſuffer'd her ſelf to be won by his Addreſſes. A better Man ought not to have been ſacrific'd to the Occaſion; a worſe had not anſwer'd to the Purpoſe. When you are weary of him, you know your Remedy.

Mrs. *Fain.* I ought to ſtand in ſome Degree of Credit with you, *Mirabell.*

Mira. In Juſtice to you, I have made you privy to my whole Deſign, and put it in your Pow'r to ruin or advance my Fortune.

Mrs. *Fain.* Whom have you inſtructed to repreſent your pretended Uncle.

Mira. Waitwell, my Servant.

Mrs. *Fain.* He is an humble Servant to *Foible* my Mother's Woman; and may win her to your Intereſt.

Mira.

Mira. Care is taken for that ——She is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning.

Mrs. *Fain.* Who?

Mira. Waitwell and *Foible.* I wou'd not tempt my Servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your Mother, in hopes to ruin me, shou'd consent to marry my pretended Uncle, he might like *Mosca* in the *Fox*, stand upon Terms; so I made him sure before hand.

Mrs. *Fain.* So, if my poor Mother is caught in a Contract, you will discover the Imposture betimes; and release her by producing a Certificate of her Gallant's former marriage.

Mira. Yes, upon Condition she consent to my marriage with her Niece, and surrender the Moiety of her Fortune in her Possession.

Mrs. *Fain.* She talk'd last Night of endeavouring at a match between *Millamant* and your Uncle.

Mira. That was by *Foible*'s Direction, and my Instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. *Fain.* Well I have an Opinion of your Success; for I believe my Lady will do any thing to get a Husband; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mira. Yes, I think the good Lady would marry any thing that resembl'd a man, tho' 'twere no more than what a Butler could pinch out of a Napkin.

Mrs. *Fain.* Female Frailty! We must all come to it, if we live to be Old, and feel the craving of a false Appetite when the true is decay'd.

Mira. An old Woman's Appetite is depray'd like that of a Girl——'Tis the Green-Sickness of a second Childhood; and like the faint Offer of a latter Spring, serves but to usher in the Fall; and withers in an affected Bloom.

Mrs. *Fain.* Here's your Mistress.

Enter Mrs. Millamant, Witwoud, *and* Mincing.

Mira. Here she comes I'faith full Sail, with her Fan spread and her Streamers out, and a Shoal of Fools for Tenders——Ha, no, I cry her mercy.

Mrs. *Fain* I see but one poor empty Sculler; and he tows her Woman after him.

Mira. You ſeem to be unattended, Madam—You us'd to have the *Beau-mond* Throng after you; and a Flock of gay fine Perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like moths about a Candle——I had like to have loſt my Compariſon for want of Breath.

Milla. O I have deny'd my ſelf Airs to Day. I have walk'd as faſt through the Croud ——

Wit. As a Favourite in Diſgrace; and with as few Followers.

Milla. Dear Mr. *Witwoud*, Truce with your Similitudes; For I am as ſick of 'em ——

Wit. As a Phyſician of a good Air——I cannot help it, Madam, tho' 'tis againſt my ſelf.

Milla. Yet again! *Mincing*, ſtand between me and his Wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. *Mincing*, like a Skreen before a great Fire. I confeſs I do blaze to Day, I am too bright.

Mrs. *Fain.* But dear *Millamant*, why were you ſo long?

Milla. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haſte? I have ask'd every living Thing I met for you; I have enquir'd after you, as after a new Faſhion.

Wit. Madam, Truce with your Similitudes——No, you met her Husband and did not ask him for her.

Mira. By your leave *Witwoud*, that were like enquiring after an old Faſhion, to ask a Husband for his Wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confeſs it.

Mrs. *Fain.* You were dreſs'd before I came abroad.

Milla. Ay, that's true ——O but then I had —— *Mincing*, what had I? Why was I ſo long?

Minc. O Mem, your Laſhip ſtaid to peruſe a Pacquet of Letters.

Milla. O ay, Letters——I had Letters——I am perſecuted with Letters——I hate Letters——No Body knows how to write Letters; and yet one has 'em, one does not know why——They ſerve one to pin up one's Hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, Madam, do you pin up your Hair with all your Letters? I find I muſt keep Copies.

Milla.

Milla. Only with thoſe in Verſe, Mr. *Witwoud.* I never pin up my Hair with Proſe. I think I try'd once, *Mincing.*

Minc. O mem, I ſhall never forget it.

Milla. Ay, poor *Mincing* tift and tift all the Morning.

Minc. 'Till I had the Cramp in my Fingers, I'll vow Mem. And all to no Purpoſe. But when your Laſhip pins it up with Poetry, it ſits ſo pleaſant the next Day as any thing, and is ſo pure and ſo crips.

Wit. Indeed, ſo crips?

Minc. You're ſuch a Critick, Mr. *Witwoud.*

Milla. Mirabell, Did not you take Exceptions laſt Night? O ay, and went away——Now I think on't I'm angry——No, now I think on't I'm pleas'd——For I believe I gave you ſome Pain.

Mira. Does that pleaſe you?

Milla. Infinitely; I love to give Pain.

Mira. You would affect a Cruelty which is not in your Nature; your true Vanity is in the Power of pleaſing.

Milla. O I ask your Pardon for that——Ones Cruelty is ones Power, and when one parts with ones Cruelty, one parts with ones Power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's Old and Ugly.

Mira. Ay, ay, ſuffer your Cruelty to ruin the Object of your Power, to deſtroy your Lover——And then how vain, how loſt a Thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true: You are no longer handſome when you've loſt your Lover; your Beauty dies upon the Inſtant: For Beauty is the Lover's Gift; 'tis he beſtows your Charms——Your Glaſs is all a Cheat. The Ugly and the Old, whom the Looking-glaſs mortifies, yet after Commendation can be flatter'd by it, and diſcover Beauties in it: For that reflects our Praiſes, rather than your Face.

Milla. O the Vanity of theſe Men! *Fainall,* d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not handſome! Now you muſt know they could not commend one, if one was not handſome. Beauty the Lover's Gift——Lord, what is a Lover, that it can give?

Why one makes Lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases: And then if one pleases one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why you make no more of making of Lovers, Madam, than of making so many Card-matches.

Milla. One no more owes one's Beauty to a Lover, than ones Wit to an Eccho: They can but reflect what we look and say; vain empty Things if we are silent or unseen, and want a Being.

Mira. Yet, to those two vain empty Things, you owe two the greatest Pleasures of your Life.

Milla. How so?

Mira. To your Lover you owe the Pleasure of hearing your selves prais'd; and to an Eccho the Pleasure of hearing your selves talk.

Wit. But I know a Lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an Eccho fair Play; she has that everlasting Rotation of Tongue, that an Eccho must wait 'till she dies, before it can catch her last Words.

Milla. O Fiction; *Fainall*, let us leave these Men.

Mira. Draw off *Witwoud*. [*Aside to* Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. *Fain.* Immediately; I have a Word or two for Mr. *Witwoud*.

Mira. I would beg a little private Audience too——

[*Exit* Witwoud *and* Mrs. Fainall.

You had the Tyranny to deny me last Night; tho' you knew I came to impart a Secret to you that concern'd my Love.

Milla. You saw I was engag'd.

Mira. Unkind. You had the leisure to entertain a Herd of Fools; Things who visit you from their excessive Idleness; bestowing on your Easiness that Time, which is the Incumbrance of their Lives. How can you find Delight in such Society? It is impossible they should admire you, they are not capable: Or if they were, it should be to you as a Mortification; for sure to please a Fool is some degree of Folly.

Milla. I please my self——Besides, sometimes to converse with Fools is for my Health.

Mira.

Mira. Your Health! Is there a worſe Diſeaſe than the Converſation of Fools?

Milla. Yes, the Vapours; Fools are Phyſick for it, next to *Aſſa-fœtida.*

Mira. You are not in a Courſe of Fools?

Milla. *Mirabell*, if you perſiſt in this offenſive Freedom——you'll diſpleaſe me——I think I muſt reſolve after all, not to have you——We ſhan't agree.

Mira. Not in our Phyſick it may be.

Milla. And yet our Diſtemper in all likelihood will be the ſame; for we ſhall be ſick of one another. I ſhan't endure to be reprimanded, nor inſtructed; 'tis ſo dull to act always by Advice, and ſo tedious to be told of one's Faults——I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you *Mirabell*——I'm reſolv'd——I think——You may go——Ha, ha, ha. What would you give, that you could help loving me?

Mira. I would give ſomething that you did not know, I cou'd not help it.

Milla. Come, don't look grave then. Well, what do you ſay to me?

Mira. I ſay that a Man may as ſoon make a Friend by his Wit, or a Fortune by his Honeſty, as win a Woman with Plain-dealing and Sincerity.

Milla. Sententious *Mirabell*! Prithee don't look with that violent and inflexible wiſe Face, like *Solomon* at the dividing of the Child in an old Tapeſtry Hanging.

Mira. You are merry, Madam, but I would perſuade you for one Moment to be ſerious.

Milla. What, with that Face? No, if you keep your Countenance, 'tis impoſſible I ſhou'd hold mine. Well after all, there is ſomething very moving in a love-ſick Face. Ha, ha, ha——Well I won't laugh, don't be peeviſh——Heighho! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a Watch-light. Well *Mirabell*, if ever you will win me woo me now——Nay, if you are ſo tedious, fare you well;——I ſee they are walking away.

Mira. Can you not find in the variety of your Diſpoſition one Moment——

Milla. To hear you tell me *Foible*'s marry'd, and your Plot like to ſpeed —— No.

Mira. But how you came to know it ——

Milla. Unleſs by the help of the Devil, you can't imagine; unleſs ſhe ſhould tell me her ſelf. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to conſider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me. [*Exit.*

Mira. I have ſomething more —— Gone —— Think of you! To think of a Whirlwind, tho' 'twere in a Whirlwind, were a Caſe of more ſteady Contemplation, a very Tranquility of Mind and Manſion. A Fellow that lives in a Windmill, has not a more whimſical Dwelling than the Heart of a Man that is lodg'd in a Woman. There is no Point of the Compaſs to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turn'd; and by one as well as another; for Motion not Method is their Occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in Love, is to be made wiſe from the Dictates of Reaſon, and yet perſevere to play the Fool by the force of Inſtinct. —— O here come my Pair of Turtles, —— What, billing ſo ſweetly! Is not *Valentine*'s Day over with you yet?

Enter Waitwell *and* Foible.

Sirrah, *Waitwell*, why ſure you think you were marry'd for your own Recreation, and not for my Convenience.

Wait. Your Pardon, Sir. With Submiſſion, we have indeed been ſolacing in lawful Delights; but ſtill with an Eye to Buſineſs, Sir. I have inſtructed her as well as I could. If ſhe can take your Directions as readily as my Inſtructions, Sir, your Affairs are in a proſperous Way.

Mira. Give you Joy, Mrs. *Foible.*

Foib. O-las, Sir, I'm ſo aſham'd —— I'm afraid my Lady has been in a Thouſand Inquietudes for me. But I proteſt, Sir, I made as much haſte as I could.

Wait. That ſhe did indeed, Sir. It was my Fault that ſhe did not make more.

Mira. That I believe.

Foib. But I told my Lady as you inſtructed me Sir That

That I had a Prospect of seeing Sir *Rowland* your Uncle; and that I wou'd put her Ladiship's Picture in my Pocket to shew him; which I'll be sure to say has made him so enamour'd of her Beauty, that he burns with Impatience to lye at her Ladyship's Feet, and worship the Original.

Mira. Excellent *Foible*! Matrimony has made you eloquent in Love.

Wait. I think she has profited, Sir. *I* think so.

Foib. You have seen Madam *Millamant*, Sir?

Mira. Yes.

Foib. I told her Sir, because *I* did not know that you might find an Opportunity; she had so much Company last Night.

Mira. Your Diligence will merit more——In the mean time—— [*Gives Mony.*

Foib. O dear Sir, your humble Servant.

Wait. Spouse.

Mira. Stand off Sir, not a Penny——Go on and prosper, *Foible*——The Lease shall be made good and the Farm stock'd, if we succeed.

Foib. I don't question your Generosity, Sir: And you need not doubt of Success. If you have no more Commands, Sir, I'll be gone, I'm sure my Lady is at her Toilet, and can't dress 'till I come.——O dear, I'm sure that [*Looking out.*] was Mrs. *Marwood* that went by in a Mask; if she has seen me with you I'm sure she'll tell my Lady. I'll make haste home and prevent her. Your Servant Sir. B w'y *Waitwell.* [*Exit* Foible.

Wait. Sir *Rowland* if you please. The Jade's so pert upon her Preferment she forgets her self.

Mira. Come Sir, will you endeavour to forget your self——and transform into Sir *Rowland.*

Wait. Why Sir; it will be impossible I shou'd remember my self——Marry'd, Knighted and attended all in one Day! 'Tis enough to make any Man forget himself. The Difficulty will be how to recover my Acquaintance and Familiarity with my former self; and fall from my Transformation to a Reformation into *Waitwell.* Nay, I shan't be quite the same *Waitwell* neither

neither——for now I remember me, I'm marry'd, and can't be my own Man again.

Ay there's my Grief; that's the ſad Change of Life;
To loſe my Title, and yet keep my Wife.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in Lady Wiſhfort's *Houſe.*

Lady Wiſhfort *at her Toilet*, Peg *waiting.*

Lady. MErciful, no News of *Foible* yet?

Peg. No, Madam.

Lady. I have no more Patience——If I have not fretted my ſelf 'till I am pale again, there's no Veracity in me. Fetch me the Red——the Red, do you hear Sweet heart? An errant Aſh colour, as I'm a Perſon. Look you how this Wench ſtirs! Why doſt thou not fetch me a little Red? Didſt thou not hear me, Mopus?

Peg. The red *Ratafia* does your Ladyſhip mean, or the Cherry-Brandy.

Lady. Ratafia, Fool. No, Fool. Not the *Ratafia*, Fool——Grant me Patience! I mean the *Spaniſh* Paper, Idiot, Complexion Darling. Paint, Paint, Paint, doſt thou underſtand that, Changeling, dangling thy Hands like Bobbins before thee. Why doſt thou not ſtir, Puppet? thou wooden Thing upon Wires.

Peg. Lord, Madam, your Ladiſhip is ſo impatient——I cannot come at the Paint, Madam; Mrs. *Foible* has lock'd it up, and carry'd the Key with her.

Lady. A Pox take you both——Fetch me the Cherry-Brandy then——[*Exit* Peg.]——I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. *Qualmſick* the Curate's Wife, that's always breeding——Wench, come, come, Wench, what

what art thou doing, Sipping? Tasting? Save thee, dost thou not know the Bottle?

Enter Peg *with a Bottle and* China *Cup.*

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a Cup.

Lady. A Cup, save thee, and what a Cup hast thou brought! Dost thou take me for a *Fairy*, to drink out of an *Acorn*? Why didst thou not bring thy Thimble? Hast thou ne'er a Brass-Thimble clinking in thy Pocket with a bit of Nutmeg? I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill.——So——again. See who that is [——*One knocks.*] Set down the Bottle first. Here, here, under the Table——What would'st thou go with the Bottle in thy Hand like a Tapster. As I'm a Person, this Wench has liv'd in an Inn upon the Road, before she came to me, like *Maritorne*'s the *Asturian* in *Don Quixote*. No *Foible* yet?

Peg. No, Madam, Mrs. *Marwood*.

Lady. O *Marwood*, let her come in. Come in good *Marwood*.

Enter Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. *Mar.* I'm surpriz'd to find your Ladyship in *dishabillé* at this time of day.

Lady. Foible's a lost Thing; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

Mrs *Mar.* I saw her but now, as I came mask'd thro' the Park, in Conference with *Mirabell*.

Lady. With *Mirabell*! You call my Blood into my Face, with mentioning that Traytor. She durst not have the Confidence. I sent her to negotiate an Affair, in which if I'm detected I'm undone. If that wheadling Villain has wrought upon *Foible* to detect me, I'm ruin'd. Oh my dear Friend, I'm a Wretch of Wretches if I'm detected.

Mrs. *Mar.* O Madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. *Foible*'s Integrity.

Lady. O, he carries Poison in his Tongue that would corrupt Integrity it self. If she has given him an Opportunity, she has as good as put her Integrity into his Hands.

Hands. Ah dear *Marwood*, what's Integrity to an Opportunity? —— Hark! I hear her —— Go you Thing and ſend her in. —— [*Exit* Peg.] —— Dear Friend retire into my Cloſet, that I may examine her with more Freedom —— You'll pardon me dear Friend, I can make bold with you —— There are Books over the Chimney —— *Quarles* and *Pryn*, and the *Short View of the Stage*, with *Bunyan*'s Works to entertain you.

[*Exit* Marwood.

Enter Foible.

O *Foible*, where haſt thou been? what haſt thou been doing?

Foib. Madam, I have ſeen the Party.

Lady. But what haſt thou done?

Foib. Nay, 'tis your Ladyſhip has done, and are to do; I have only promis'd. But a man ſo enamour'd —— ſo tranſported! Well, if worſhipping of Pictures be a Sin —— Poor Sir *Rowland*, I ſay.

Lady. The Miniature has been counted like. —— But haſt thou not betray'd me, *Foible*? Haſt thou not detected me to that faithleſs *Mirabell*? —— What hadſt thou to do with him in the Park? Anſwer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foib. So, the Devil has been before-hand with me, what ſhall I ſay? —— Alas, Madam, cou'd I help it, if I met that confident Thing? Was I in Fault? If you had heard how he us'd me, and all upon your Ladyſhip's Account, I'm ſure you wou'd not ſuſpect my Fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worſt I could have born: But he had a Fling at your Ladyſhip too; and then I could not hold: But I faith I gave him his own.

Lady. Me? What did the filthy Fellow ſay?

Foib. O Madam; 'tis a Shame to ſay what he ſaid —— With his Taunts and his Fleers, toſſing up his Noſe. Humh (ſays he) what you are a hatching ſome Plot (ſays he) you are ſo early abroad, or Catering (ſays he) ferreting for ſome disbanded Officer I warrant —— Half Pay is but thin Subſiſtance (ſays he) —— Well, what Penſion does your Lady propoſe? Let me

ſee

ſee (ſays he) what ſhe muſt come down pretty deep now, ſhe's ſuperannuated (ſays he) and——

Lady. Ods my Life, I'll have him, I'll have him murder'd. I'll have him poiſon'd. Where does he eat? I'll marry a Drawer to have him poiſon'd in his Wine. I'll ſend for *Robin* from *Lockets*——Immediately.

Foib. Poiſon him? Poiſoning's too good for him. Starve him, Madam, ſtarve him; marry Sir *Rowland*, and get him diſinherited. O you would bleſs your ſelf, to hear what he ſaid.

Lady. A Villain, ſuperannuated!

Foib. Humh (ſays he) I hear you are laying Deſigns againſt me too (ſays he) and Mrs. *Millamant* is to marry my Uncle; (he does not ſuſpect a Word of your Ladyſhip;) but (ſays he) I'll fit you for that, I warrant you (ſays he) I'll hamper you for that (ſays he) you and your old Frippery too (ſays he) I'll handle you——

Lady. Audacious Villain! handle me, wou'd he durſt——Frippery? old Frippery! Was there ever ſuch a foul-mouth'd Fellow? I'll be marry'd to morrow, I'll be contracted to Night.

Foib. The ſooner the better, Madam.

Lady. Will Sir *Rowland* be here, ſay'ſt thou? when, *Foible*?

Foib. Incontinently, Madam. No new Sheriff's Wife expects the Return of her Husband after Knighthood, with that Impatience in which Sir *Rowland* burns for the dear Hour of kiſſing your Ladyſhip's Hand after Dinner.

Lady. Frippery! Superannuated Frippery! I'll Frippery the Villain; I'll reduce him to Frippery and Rags; A Tatterdemallion——I hope to ſee him hung with Tatters, like a Long-Lane Pent-houſe, or a Gibbet-Thief. A ſlander-mouth'd Railer: I warrant the Spendthrift Prodigal's in Debt as much as the million-Lottery, or the whole Court upon a Birth-Day. I'll ſpoil his Credit with his Taylor. Yes, he ſhall have my Niece with her Fortune, he ſhall.

Foib. He! I hope to ſee him lodge in *Ludgate* firſt, and

and angle into *Black-Fryars* for Braſs Farthings, with an old mitten.

Lady. Ay dear *Foible*; thank thee for that, dear *Foible*. He has put me out of all Patience. I ſhall never recompoſe my Features, to receive Sir *Rowland* with any Oeconomy of Face. This Wretch has fretted me that I am abſolutely decay'd. Look *Foible*.

Foib. Your Ladyſhip has frown'd a little too raſhly, indeed Madam. There are ſome Cracks diſcernable in the white Verniſh.

Lady. Let me ſee the Glaſs — Cracks, ſay'ſt thou? Why I am arrantly flea'd — I look like an old peel'd Wall. Thou muſt repair me, *Foible*, before Sir *Rowland* comes; or I ſhall never keep up to my Picture.

Foib. I warrant you, Madam; a little Art once made your Picture like you; and now a little of the ſame Art muſt make you like your Picture. Your Picture muſt fit for you, Madam.

Lady. But art thou ſure Sir *Rowland* will not fail to come? Or will a not fail when he does come? Will he be Importunate, *Foible*, and puſh? For if he ſhould not be Importunate — I ſhall never break Decorums — I ſhall die with Confuſion, if I am forc'd to advance — Oh no, I can never advance — I ſhall ſwoon if he ſhould expect Advances. No, I hope Sir *Rowland* is better bred, than to put a Lady to the neceſſity of breaking her Forms. I won't be too coy neither. — I won't give him Deſpair — But a little Diſdain is not amiſs; a little Scorn is alluring.

Foib. A little Scorn becomes your Ladyſhip.

Lady. Yes, but Tenderneſs becomes me beſt — A ſort of a Dyingneſs — You ſee that Picture has a ſort of a — Ha *Foible*? A Swimmingneſs in the Eyes — Yes, I'll look ſo — my Niece affects it; but ſhe wants Features. Is Sir *Rowland* handſome? Let my Toilet be remov'd — I'll dreſs above. I'll receive Sir *Rowland* here. Is he handſome? Don't anſwer me. I won't know: I'll be ſurpriz'd. I'll be taken by Surprize.

Foib. By Storm, Madam. Sir *Rowland*'s a briſk man.

Lady. Is he! O then he'll Importune, if he's a briſk man. I ſhall ſave Decorums if Sir *Rowland* importunes.

I have a mortal Terror at the Apprehenſion of offending againſt Decorums. O I'm glad he's a briſk man. Let my Things be remov'd, good *Foible*. [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. *Fain.* O *Foible*, I have been in a Fright, leſt I ſhould come to late. That Devil, *Marwood*, ſaw you in the Park with *Mirabell*, and I'm afraid will diſcover it to my Lady.

Foib. Diſcover what, Madam?

Mrs. *Fain.* Nay, nay, put not on that ſtrange Face. I am privy to the whole Deſign, and know that *Waitwell*, to whom thou wert this morning marry'd, is to perſonate *Mirabell*'s Uncle, and as ſuch winning my Lady, to involve her in thoſe Difficulties from which *Mirabell* only muſt releaſe her, by his making his Conditions to have my Couſin and her Fortune left to her own Diſpoſal.

Foib. O dear Madam, I beg your Pardon. It was not my Confidence in your Ladyſhip that was deficient; but I thought the former good Correſpondence between your Ladyſhip and Mr. *Mirabell*, might have hinder'd his communicating this Secret.

Mrs. *Fain.* Dear *Foible*, forget that.

Foib. O dear Madam, Mr. *Mirabell* is ſuch a ſweet winning Gentleman——But your Ladyſhip is the Pattern of Generoſity.——Sweet Lady, to be ſo good! Mr. *Mirabell* cannot chuſe but be grateful. I find your Ladyſhip has his Heart ſtill. Now, Madam, I can ſafely tell your Ladyſhip our Succeſs, Mrs. *Marwood* had told my Lady; but I warrant I manag'd my ſelf. I turn'd it all for the better. I told my Lady that Mr. *Mirabell* rail'd at her. I laid horrid Things to his Charge, I'll vow; and my Lady is ſo incens'd, that ſhe'll be contracted to Sir *Rowland* to Night, ſhe ſays; ——I warrant I work'd her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they ſay of a *Welſh* Maiden-head.

Mrs. *Fain.* O rare *Foible*!

Foib. Madam, I beg your Ladyſhip to acquaint Mr. *Mirabell* of his Succeſs. I would be ſeen as little as poſſible to ſpeak to him, ——beſides, I believe Madam *Marwood* watches me.—She has a Month's Mind; but

but I know Mr. *Mirabell* can't abide her. —— [*Enter Footman*] *John* —— remove my Lady's Toilet. Madam, your Servant. My Lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me, if I stay.

Mrs. *Fain.* I'll go with you up the back Stairs, lest I should meet her. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. *Mar.* Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this Importance? Yes, I shall watch you. Why this Wench is the *Pass-par-tout*, a very Master-Key to every Body's strong Box. My Friend *Fainall*, have you carry'd it so swimmingly? I thought there was something in it; but it seems it's over with you. Your Loathing is not from a want of Appetite then, but from a Surfeit. Else you could never be so cool to fall from a Principal to be an Assistant; to procure for him! A Pattern of Generosity, that I confess. Well, Mr. *Fainall*, you have met with your match. —— O Man, Man! Woman, Woman! The Devil's an Ass: If I were a Painter, I would draw him like an Idiot, a Driveler, with a Bib and Bells. Man should have his Head and Horns, and Woman the rest of him. Poor simple Fiend! Madam *Marwood* has a Month's Mind, but he can't abide her —— 'Twere better for him you had not been his Confessor in that Affair; without you could have kept his Counsel closer. I shall not prove another Pattern of Generosity, and stalk for him, 'till he takes his Stand to aim at a Fortune, he has not oblig'd me to that, with those Excesses of himself; and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good Lady, panting ripe; with a Heart full of Hope, and a Head full of Care, like any Chymist upon the Day of Projection.

Enter Lady Wishfort.

Lady. O dear *Marwood* what shall I say, for this rude Forgetfulness —— But my dear Friend is all Goodness.

Mrs. *Mar.* No Apologies, dear Madam. I have been very well entertain'd.

Lady. As I'm a Person I am in a very Chaos to think

I

I ſhou'd ſo forget my ſelf——But I have ſuch an Olio of Affairs really I know not what to do——[*Calls*]——*Foible*——I expect my Nephew Sir *Willfull* ev'ry Moment too:——Why *Foible*——He means to Travel for Improvement.

Mrs. *Mar.* Methinks Sir *Willfull* ſhould rather think of marrying than Travelling at his Years: I hear he is turn'd of Forty.

Lady. O he's in leſs Danger of being ſpoil'd by his Travels——I am againſt my Nephew's marrying too Young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquir'd Diſcretion to chuſe for himſelf.

Mrs. *Mar.* Methinks Mrs. *Millamant* and he wou'd make a very fit match. He may Travel afterwards. 'Tis a Thing very uſual with young Gentlemen.

Lady. I promiſe you I have thought on't——And ſince 'tis your Judgment, I'll think on't again. I aſſure you I will; I value your Judgment extreamly. On my Word I'll propoſe it.

Enter Foible.

Come, come *Foible*——I had forgot my Nephew will be here before Dinner——I muſt make haſte.

Foib. Mr *Witwoud* and Mr. *Petulant*, are come to Dine with your Ladyſhip.

Lady. O Dear, I can't appear 'till I am dreſs'd. Dear *Marwood* ſhall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em. I'll make all imaginable haſte. Dear Friend excuſe me.

[*Exit Lady and* Foible.

Enter Mrs. Millamant *and* Mincing.

Milla. Sure never any thing was ſo Unbred as that odious man.——*Marwood*, your Servant.

Mrs. *Mar.* You have a Colour, what's the matter?

Milla. That horrid Fellow *Petulant*, has provok'd me into a Flame——I have broke my Fan——*Mincing*, lend me yours;——Is not all the Powder out of my Hair?

Mrs.

Mrs. *Mar.* No. What has he done?

Milla. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talk'd——Nay, he has ſaid nothing neither; but he has contradicted ev'ry Thing that has been ſaid. For my part, I thought *Witwoud* and he wou'd have quarrell'd.

Minc. I vow Mem, I thought once they wou'd have fit.

Milla. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing I ſwear, that one has not the Liberty of chuſing one's Acquaintance as one does ones Cloaths.

Mrs. *Mar.* If we had the Liberty, we ſhou'd be as weary of one Set of Acquaintance, tho' never ſo good, as we are of one Suit, tho' never ſo fine. A Fool and a *Doily* Stuff wou'd now and then find Days of Grace, and be worn for Variety.

Milla. I could conſent to wear 'em, if they wou'd wear alike; but Fools never wear out —— They are ſuch *Drap-du-berry* Things! Without one cou'd give 'em to ones Chamber-maid after a Day or two.

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Twere better ſo indeed. Or what think you of the Play-houſe? A fine gay gloſſy Fool ſhou'd be given there, like a new maſking Habit, after the Maſquerade is over, and we have done with the Diſguiſe. For a Fool's Viſit is always a Diſguiſe; and never admitted by a Woman of Wit, but to blind her Affair with a Lover of Senſe. If you wou'd but appear bare-fac'd now, and own *Mirabell*; you might as eaſily put off *Petulant* and *Witwoud*, as your Hood and Scarf. And indeed 'tis time, for the Town has found it: The Secret is grown too big for the Pretence: 'Tis like Mrs. *Primly*'s great Belly; ſhe may lace it down before, but it burniſhes on her Hips. Indeed, *Millamant*, you can no more conceal it, than my Lady *Strammel* can her Face, that goodly Face, which in Defiance of her Rheniſh-wine Tea, will not be comprehended in a maſk.

Milla. I'll take my Death, *Marwood*, you are more Cenſorious than a decay'd Beauty, or a diſcarded Toaſt; *Mincing*, tell the men they may come up. My Aunt is not dreſſing; their Folly is leſs provoking than your Malice.

Malice. The Town has found it. [*Exit* Mincing.] What has it found? That *Mirabell* loves me is no more a Secret, than it is a Secret that you diſcover'd it to my Aunt, or than the Reaſon why you diſcover'd it is a Secret.

Mrs. *Mar.* You are nettl'd.

Mill. You're miſtaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs. *Mar.* Indeed, my Dear, you'll tear another Fan, if you don't mitigate thoſe violent Airs.

Mill. O ſilly! Ha, ha, ha—I cou'd laugh immoderately. Poor *Mirabell!* His Conſtancy to me has quite deſtroy'd his Complaiſance for all the World beſide. I ſwear, I never enjoin'd it him, to be ſo coy—If I had the Vanity to think he wou'd obey me; I wou'd command him to ſhew more Gallantry—'Tis hardly well bred to be ſo particular on one hand, and ſo inſenſible on the other. But I deſpair to prevail, and ſo let him follow his own Way. Ha, ha, ha. Pardon me, Dear Creature, I muſt Laugh, ha, ha, ha; tho' I grant you 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha.

Mrs. *Mar.* What Pity 'tis, ſo much fine Raillery, and deliver'd with ſo ſignificant Geſture, ſhou'd be ſo unhappily directed to miſcarry.

Milla. Hæ? Dear Creature I ask your Pardon—I ſwear I did not mind you.

Mrs. *Mar.* Mr. *Mirabell* and you both may think it a Thing impoſſible, when I ſhall tell him by telling you—

Milla. O dear, what? for it is the ſame thing if I hear it—Ha, ha, ha.

Mrs. *Mar.* That I deteſt him, hate him, Madam.

Milla. O Madam, why ſo do I—And yet the Creature loves me, ha, ha, ha. How can one forbear laughing to think of it—I am a Sybil if I am not amaz'd to think what he can ſee in me. I'll take my Death, I think you are handſomer—and within a Year or two as Young.—If you cou'd but ſtay for me, I ſhou'd overtake you—But that cannot be—Well, that Thought makes me melancholy—but now I'll be ſad.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Mar.* Your merry Note may be chang'd sooner than you think.

Milla. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolv'd I'll have a Song to keep up my Spirits.

Enter Mincing.

Minc. The Gentlemen stay but to Comb, Madam; and will wait on you.

Milla. Desire Mrs.—— that is in the next Room to sing the Song I would have learnt Yesterday. You shall hear it, Madam——Not that there's any great matter in it——But 'tis agreeable to my Humour.

SONG.

Set by Mr. John Eccles, *and Sung by Mrs.* Hodgson.

1.

LOVE's but the Frailty of the Mind,
When 'tis not with Ambition join'd;
A sickly Flame, which if not fed expires;
And feeding, wastes in Self consuming Fires.

2.

'Tis not to wound a wanton Boy
Or amorous Youth, that gives the Joy;
But 'tis the Glory to have pierc'd a Swain.
For whom inferiour Beauties sigh'd in vain.

3.

Then I alone the Conquest prize;
When I insult a Rival's Eyes:
If there's Delight in Love, 'tis when I see
That Heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.

Enter

Enter Petulant *and* Witwoud.

Milla. Is your Animosity compos'd, Gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, Raillery, Madam, we have no Animosity —— We hit off a little Wit now and then, but no Animosity ——— The falling out of Wits is like the falling out of Lovers ——— We agree in the main, like Treble and Base. Ha, *Petulant*!

Pet. Ay in the main —— But when I have a Humour to contradict.

Wit. Ay, when he has a Humour to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my Cue. Then we contradict one another like two Battle-dores: For Contradictions beget one another like *Jews*.

Pet. If he says Black's Black ——— If I have a Humour to say 'tis Blue —— Let that pass ——— All's one for that. If I have a Humour to prove it, it must be granted.

Wit. Not positively must ——— But it may ——— it may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must, upon Proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon Proof positive it must; but upon Proof presumptive it only may. That's a Logical Distinction now, Madam.

Mrs. *Mar.* I perceive your Debates are of Importance, and very learnedly handl'd.

Pet. Importance is one Thing, and Learning's another; but a Debate's a Debate, that I assert.

Wit. *Petulant*'s an Enemy to Learning; he relies altogether on his Parts.

Pet. No, I'm no Enemy to Learning! it hurts not me.

Mrs. *Mar.* That's a Sign indeed it is no Enemy to you.

Pet. No, no, it's no Enemy to any Body, but them that have it.

Milla. Well, an illiterate Man's my Aversion. I wonder at the Impudence of any illiterate Man, to offer to make Love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Milla.

Milla. Ah! to marry an Ignorant! that can hardly Read or Write.

Pet. Why ſhould a Man be ever the further from being Marry'd tho' he can't read, any more than he is from being Hang'd. The Ordinary's paid for ſetting the *Pſalm*, and the Pariſh-Prieſt for reading the Ceremony. And for the reſt which is to follow in both Caſes, a Man may do it without Book——So all's one for that.

Milla. D'ye hear the Creature? Lord, here's Company, I'll be gone.

[*Exeunt* Millamant *and* Mincing.

Wit. In the Name of *Bartlemew* and his Fair, what have we here?

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Tis your Brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I——Yes, I think it is he——I've almoſt forgot him; I have not ſeen him ſince the Revolution.

Enter Sir Willfull Witwoud *in a Country Riding Habit, and Servant to Lady* Wiſhfort.

Serv. Sir, my Lady's dreſſing. Here's Company; if you pleaſe to walk in, in the mean time.

Sir *Will.* Dreſſing! What, it's but Morning here I warrant with you in *London*; we ſhould count it towards Afternoon in our Parts, down in *Shropſhire*——Why then belike my Aunt han't din'd yet——Ha, Friend?

Serv. Your Aunt, Sir?

Sir *Will.* My Aunt, Sir, yes my Aunt, Sir, and your Lady, Sir; your Lady is my Aunt, Sir——Why, what do'ſt thou not know me, Friend? Why then ſend ſome Body here that does. How long haſt thou liv'd with thy Lady, Fellow, ha?

Serv. A Week, Sir; longer than any Body in the Houſe, except my Lady's Woman.

Sir *Will.* Why then belike thou doſt not know thy Lady, if thou ſeeſt her, ha Friend?

Serv.

Serv. Why truly Sir, I cannot ſafely ſwear to her Face in a Morning, before ſhe is dreſs'd. 'Tis like I may give a ſhrewd gueſs at her by this time.

Sir *Will.* Well, prithee try what thou canſt do; if thou canſt not gueſs, enquire her out, do'ſt hear, Fellow? And tell her, her Nephew, Sir *Willfull Witwoud*, is in the Houſe.

Serv. I ſhall, Sir.

Sir *Will.* Hold ye, hear me, Friend; a Word with you in your Ear, prithee who are theſe Gallants?

Serv. Really, Sir, I can't tell; here come ſo many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. ——— [*Exit Servant.*

Sir *Will.* Oons this Fellow knows leſs than a Starling; I don't think a knows his own Name.

Mrs. *Mar.* Mr. *Witwoud*, your Brother is not behind hand in Forgetfulneſs ——— I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope ſo ——— The Devil take him that remembers firſt, I ſay.

Sir *Will.* Save you Gentlemen and Lady.

Mrs. *Mar.* For ſhame, Mr. *Witwoud*; why won't you ſpeak to him? ——And you, Sir.

Wit. Petulant ſpeak.

Pet. And you, Sir.

Sir *Will.* No Offence, I hope. [*Salutes* Marwood.

Mrs *Mar.* No ſure, Sir.

Wit. This is a vile Dog, I ſee that already. No Offence! Ha, ha, ha, to him; to him *Petulant*, ſmoke him.

Pet. It ſeems as if you had come a Journey, Sir; hem, hem. [*Surveying him round.*

Sir *Will.* Very likely, Sir, that it may ſeem ſo.

Pet. No Offence, I hope, Sir.

Wit. Smoke the Boots; the Boots; *Petulant*, the Boots; Ha, ha, ha.

Sir *Will.* May be not, Sir; thereafter as 'tis meant, Sir.

Pet. Sir, I preſume upon the Information of your Boots.

Sir *Will.* Why, 'tis like you may, Sir: If you are not satisfy'd with the Information of my Boots, Sir, if you will step to the Stable, you may enquire further of my Horse, Sir,

Pet. Your Horse, Sir! Your Horse is an Ass, Sir!

Sir *Will.* Do you speak by way of Offence, Sir?

Mrs. *Mar.* The Gentleman's merry, that's all, Sir ——S'life, we shall have a Quarrel betwixt an Horse and an Ass, before they find one another out. You must not take any thing amiss from your Friends, Sir. You are among your Friends here, tho' it may be you don't know it——If I am not mistaken, you are Sir *Willful Witwoud.*

Sir *Will.* Right, Lady; I am Sir *Willfull Witwoud*, so I write my self; no Offence to any Body, I hope; and Nephew to the Lady *Wishfort*, of this Mansion.

Mrs *Mar.* Don't you know this Gentleman, Sir?

Sir *Will.* Hum! What, sure 'tis not——— Yea by'r Lady, but 'tis——'Sheart I know not whether 'tis or no——Yea but 'tis, by the *Rekin.* Brother *Anthony*! What *Tony*, Ifaith! What do'st thou not know me? By'r Lady nor I thee, thou art so Becravated, and so Beperriwig'd——'Sheart why do'st not speak? Art thou over-joy'd?

Wit. Odso Brother, is it you? Your Servant, Brother.

Sir *Will.* Your Servant! Why yours, Sir. Your Servant again——'Sheart, and your Friend and Servant to that——And a——(*puff*) and a Flap Dragon for your Service, Sir: And a Hare's Foot, and a Hare's Scut for your Service, Sir; an you be so cold and so courtly!

Wit. No Offence, I hope, Brother.

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart, Sir, but there is, and much Offence——A Pox, is this your Inns o' Court Breeding, not to know your Friends and your Relations, your Elders, and your Betters?

Wit. Why, Brother *Willfull* of *Salop*, you may be as short as a *Shrewsbury* Cake, if you please. But I tell you, 'tis not modish to know Relations in Town. You think you're in the Country, where great lubbard

Brother

Brothers ſlabber and kiſs one another when they meet, like a Call of Serjeants——'Tis not the Faſhion here; 'tis not indeed, dear Brother.

Sir *Will.* The Faſhion's a Fool; and you're a Fop, dear Brother. 'Sheart, I've ſuſpected this ——By'r Lady I conjectur'd you were a Fop, ſince you began to change the Stile of your Letters, and write in a ſcrap of Paper gilt round the Edges, no broader than a *Subpœna*. I might expect this, when you left off Honour'd Brother; and hoping you are in good Health, and ſo forth——To begin with a Rat me, Knight, I'm ſo ſick of a laſt Nights Debauch ——Od's Heart, and then tell a familiar Tale of a Cock and a Bull, and a Whore and a Bottle, and ſo conclude ——You could write News before you were out of your Time, when you liv'd with honeſt *Pumple-Noſe* the Attorney of *Furnival's* Inn——You cou'd intreat to be remember'd then to your Friends round the *Rekin*. We could have Gazetts then, and *Dawks's* Letter, and the Weekly-Bill, 'till of late Days.

Pet 'Slife, *Witwoud*, were you ever an Attorney's Clerk? Of the Family of the *Furnivals*. Ha, ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was for a while. Not long, not long, pſhaw, I was not in my own Power then. An Orphan, and this Fellow was my Guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to conſent to that Man to come to *London*. He had the Diſpoſal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound Prentice to a Felt-maker in *Shrewsbury*; this Fellow would have bound me to a Maker of Felts.

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a Maker of Fops; where, I ſuppoſe, you have ſerv'd your Time; and now you may ſet up for your ſelf.

Mrs. *Mar.* You intend to Travel, Sir, as I'm inform'd.

Sir *Will.* Belike I may, Madam. I may chance to ſail upon the ſalt Seas, if my mind hold.

Pet. And the Wind ſerve.

Sir *Will.* Serve or not ſerve, I ſhan't ask Licenſe of you, Sir; nor the Weather-Cock your Companion. I direct my Diſcourſe to the Lady, Sir; 'Tis like my

Aunt may have told you, Madam ——— Yes, I have ſettl'd my Concerns, I may ſay now, and am minded to ſee Foreign Parts. If an how that the Peace holds, whereby that is Taxes abate.

Mrs. *Mar.* I thought you had deſign'd for *France* at all Adventures.

Sir *Will.* I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am ſomewhat dainty in making a Reſolution, ——— becauſe when I make it I keep it. I don't ſtand ſtill I, ſhall I, then; if I ſay't, I'll do't: But *I* have Thoughts to tarry a ſmall matter in Town, to learn ſomewhat of your *Lingo* firſt, before *I* croſs the Seas. I'd gladly have a ſpice of your *French* as they ſay, whereby to hold Diſcourſe in Foreign Countries.

Mrs. *Mar.* Here is an Academy in Town for that uſe.

Sir *Will.* There is? 'Tis like there may.

Mrs. *Mar.* No doubt you will return very much improv'd.

Wit. Yes, reſin'd like a *Dutch* Skipper from a Whale-fiſhing.

Enter Lady Wiſhfort *and* Fainall.

Lady. Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir *Will.* Aunt, your Servant.

Fain. Sir *Willfull*, your moſt faithful Servant.

Sir *Will.* Couſin *Fainall*, give me your Hand.

Lady. Couſin *Witwoud*, your Servant; Mr. *Petulant*, your Servant. ——— Nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink any Thing after your Journey, Nephew, before you eat? Dinner's almoſt ready.

Sir *Will.* *I'm* very well *I* thank you, Aunt —— However, *I* thank you for your courteous Offer. 'Sheart *I* was afraid you wou'd have been in the Faſhion too, and have remember'd to have forgot your Relations. Here's your Couſin *Tony*, belike, *I* may'nt call him Brother for fear of Offence.

Lady. O he's a Rallier, Nephew ——— My Couſin's a Wit. And your great Wits always rally their beſt Friends to chuſe. When you have been abroad, Nephew,

phew, you'll underſtand Raillery better. [*Fain. and* [*Mrs.* Marwood *talk apart.*

Sir *Will.* Why then let him hold his Tongue in the mean Time; and rail when that Day comes.

Enter Mincing.

Minc. Mem, *I* come to acquaint your Laſhip that Dinner is impatient.

Sir *Will.* Impatient? Why then belike it won't ſtay 'till *I* pull off my Boots. Sweet-heart can you help me to a pair of Slippers? —— my man's with his Horſes, *I* warrant.

Lady. Fie, fie, Nephew, you wou'd not pull off your Boots here —— Go down into the Hall —— Dinner ſhall ſtay for you —— my Nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, Madam —— Gentlemen will you walk. *Marwood* ——

Mrs. *Mar.* *I'll* follow you, Madam —— Before Sir *Willfull* is ready.

[*Manent Mrs* Marwood *and* Fainall.

Fain. Why then *Foible's* a Bawd, an Errant, Rank, Match making Bawd. And *I* it ſeems am a Husband, a Rank-Husband; and my Wife a very Errant, Rank-Wife, —— all in the Way of the *world*. 'Sdeath to be an Anticipated Cuckold, a Cuckold in Embrio? Sure *I* was born with budding Antlers like a young Satyr, or a Citizen's Child. 'Sdeath to be Out-witted; to be Out-jilted —— Out-matrimony'd, —— *If I* had kept my Speed like a Stag, 'twere ſomewhat, ——— but to crawl after, with my Horns like a Snail, and be out-ſtrip'd by my Wife —— 'tis Scurvy Wedlock.

Mrs. *Mar.* Then ſhake it off, you have often wiſh'd for an Opportunity to part; —— and now you have it. But firſt prevent their Plot, —— the half of *Millamant's* Fortune is too Conſiderable to be parted with, to a Foe, to *Mirabell*.

Fain. Dam him, that had been mine —— had you not made that fond Diſcovery —— That had been forfeited, had they been married. My Wife had added Luſtre to my Horns, by that Encreaſe of Fortune, ——

I cou'd have worn 'em tipt with Gold, tho' my Forehead had been furniſh'd like a Deputy-Lieutenants Hall.

Mrs. *Mar.* They may prove a Cap of maintenance to you ſtill, if you can away with your Wife. And ſhe's no worſe than when you had her——*I* dare ſwear ſhe had given up her Game, before ſhe was marry'd.

Fain. Hum! That may be——She might throw up her Cards; but *I*'ll be hang'd if ſhe did not put Pam in her Pocket.

Mrs. *Mar.* You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected; why ſhould you not keep her longer than you intended?

Fain. The Means, the Means.

Mrs. *Mar.* Diſcover to my Lady your Wife's Conduct; threaten to part with her—— my Lady loves her, and will come to any Compoſition to ſave her Reputation, take the Opportunity of breaking it, juſt upon the Diſcovery of this *Impoſture*. My Lady will be enrag'd beyond Bounds, and ſacrifice Neice, and Fortune, and all at that Conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm, if ſhe ſhou'd flag in her part, *I* will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. Faith this has an Appearance.

Mrs. *Mar.* *I*'m ſorry *I* hinted to my Lady to endeavour a match between *Millamant* and Sir *Willfull*, that may be an Obſtacle.

Fain. O, for that matter leave me to manage him; *I*'ll diſable him for that, he will drink like a *Dane*: After Dinner, *I*'ll ſet his Hand in.

Mrs. *Mar.* Well, how do you ſtand affected towards your Lady?

Fain. Why faith *I*'m thinking of it.——Let me ſee ——*I* am marry'd already; ſo that's over,—— my Wife has plaid the Jade with me——Well, that's over too——*I* never lov'd her, or if *I* had, why that wou'd have been over too by this time——Jealous of her *I* cannot be, for *I* am certain; ſo there's an end of Jealouſie. Weary of her, *I* am, and ſhall be——No, there's no end of that; No, no, that were too much

to hope. This far concerning my Repoſe. Now for my Reputation,——As to my own, I marry'd not for it; ſo that's out of the Queſtion.——And as to my Part in my Wife's——Why ſhe had parted with hers before; ſo bringing none to me, ſhe can take none from me; 'tis againſt all Rule of Play, that I ſhould loſe to one, who has not wherewithal to ſtake.

Mrs. *Mar.* Beſides you forget, Marriage is Honourable.

Fain. Hum! Faith and that's well thought on; Marriage is Honourable as you ſay; and if ſo, wherefore ſhould Cuckoldom be a Diſcredit, being deriv'd from ſo Honourable a Root?

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay I know not; if the Root be Honourable, why not the Branches?

Fain. So, ſo, why this Point's clear,——Well, how do we proceeed?

Mrs. *Mar.* I will contrive a Letter which ſhall be deliver'd to my Lady at the time when that *Raſcal* who is to act Sir *Rowland* is with her. It ſhall come as from an unknown Hand——for the leſs I appear to know of the Truth——the better I can play the Incendiary. Beſides, I would not have *Foible* provok'd if I cou'd help it,——becauſe you know ſhe knows ſome Paſſages——Nay I expect all will come out. But let the Mine be ſprung firſt, and then I care not if I'm diſcover'd.

Fain. If the worſt come to the worſt,——I'll turn my Wife to Graſs——I have already a Deed of Settlement of the beſt Part of her Eſtate; which I wheadl'd out of her; and that you ſhall partake at leaſt.

Mrs. *Mar.* I hope you are convinc'd that I hate *Mirabell*, now you'll be no more Jealous.

Fain. Jealous, no,——by this Kiſs——let Husbands be Jealous; but let the Lover ſtill believe. Or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his Pleaſure, and prepare the Joy that follows, when he proves his Miſtreſs true; but let Husbands Doubts convert to

endleſs Jealouſie; or if they have Belief, let it corrupt to Superſtition, and blind Credulity. I am ſingle; and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the Badge, but I'll diſown the Order. And ſince I take my Leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common Motto to their common Creſt.

All Husbands muſt, or Pain, or Shame, endure;
The Wiſe too jealous are, Fools too ſecure.

[Exeunt.

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

[*Scene continues.*]

Enter Lady Wiſhfort *and* Foible.

Lady. IS Sir *Rowland* coming ſay'ſt thou, *Foible*? and are things in Order?

Foib. Yes, Madam. I have put Wax-Lights in the Sconces; and plac'd the Footmen in a Row in the Hall, in their beſt Liveries, with the Coachman and Poſtilion to fill up the Equipage.

Lady. Have you pulvill'd the Coachman and Poſtilion, that they may not ſtink of the Stable, when Sir *Rowland* comes by?

Foib. Yes, Madam.

Lady. And are the Dancers and the Muſick ready, that he may be entertain'd in all Points with Correſpondence to his Paſſion?

Foib. All is ready, Madam.

Lady. And ——— well ——— and how do I look, *Foible*.

Foib. Moſt killing well, Madam.

Lady. Well, and how ſhall I receive him? In what Figure ſhall I give his Heart the firſt Impreſſion? There is a great deal in the firſt Impreſſion. Shall I ſit? ——— No, I won't ſit ——— I'll walk ——— ay I'll walk from the Door upon his Entrance; and then turn full upon him ——— No, that will be too ſudden. I'll lye ——— ay, I'll lye down ——— I'll receive him in my little Dreſſing-Room, there's a Couch ——— Yes, yes, I'll give the firſt Impreſſion on a Couch ——— I won't lye neither, but loll and lean upon one Elbow; with one Foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful Way ——— Yes ——— and then as ſoon as he appears, ſtart, ay, ſtart

and be ſurpriz'd, and riſe to meet him in a pretty Diſorder ——— Yes ——— O, nothing is more alluring than a Levee from a Couch in ſome Confuſion ——— It ſhews the Foot to Advantage, and furniſhes with Bluſhes, and re-compoſing Airs beyond Compariſon. Hark! There's a Coach.

Foib. 'Tis he, Madam.

Lady. O dear, has my Nephew made his Addreſſes to *Millamant*? I order'd him.

Foib. Sir *Willfull* is ſet into Drinking, Madam, in the Parlour.

Lady. Ods my Life, I'll ſend him to her. Call her down, *Foible*; bring her hither. I'll ſend him as I go ——— When they are together, then come to me *Foible*, that I may not be too long alone with Sir *Rowland*.

[*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Millamant, *and Mrs.* Fainall.

Foib. Madam, I ſtay'd here, to tell your Ladiſhip that Mr. *Mirabell* has waited this half Hour for an Opportunity to talk with you. Tho' my Lady's Orders were to leave you and Sir *Willfull* together. Shall I tell Mr. *Mirabell* that you are at Leiſure?

Mill. No ——— What would the dear Man have? I am thoughtful and would amuſe my ſelf, ——— bid him come another time.

Repeating and walking about. } *There never was yet Woman made,*
Nor ſhall but to be Curs'd.

That's hard!

Fain. You are very fond of Sir *John Suckling* to day, *Millamant*, and the Poets.

Milla. He? Ay, and filthy Verſes ——— So I am.

Foib. Sir *Willfull* is coming, Madam. Shall I ſend Mr. *Mirabell* away.

Milla. Ay, if you pleaſe, *Foible*, ſend him away, ——

Or

Or ſend him hither ——— juſt as you will, dear *Foible.* ——— I think I'll ſee him ——— Shall I? Ay, let the Wretch come.

Repeating.] Thyrſis, *a Youth of the inſpir'd Train.*

Dear *Fainall*, entertain Sir *Willfull* ——— Thou haſt Philoſophy to undergo a Fool, thou art marry'd and haſt Patience ——— I would confer with my own Thoughts.

Fain. I am oblig'd to you, that you would make me your Proxy in this Affair; but I have Buſineſs of my own.

Enter Sir Willfull.

O Sir *Willfull*; you are come at the Critical Inſtant. There's your Miſtreſs up to the Ears in Love and Contemplation, purſue your Point, now or never.

Sir *Will.* Yes; my Aunt will have it ſo, ——— I would gladly have been encourag'd with a Bottle or two, becauſe I'm ſomewhat wary at firſt, before I am acquainted; ——— But I hope, after a time, I ſhall break my Mind ——— that is upon further Acquaintance ——— So for the preſent, Couſin, I'll take my Leave ——— If ſo be you'll be ſo kind to make my Excuſe, I'll return to my Company ———

This while Milla. *walks about Reſteating to her ſelf.*

Fain. O fie, Sir *Willfull*! What, you muſt not be Daunted.

Sir *Will.* Daunted, no, that's not it, it is not ſo much for that ——— for if ſo be that I ſet on't, I'll do't. But only for the preſent, 'tis ſufficient 'till further Acquaintance, that's all ——— your Servant.

Fain. Nay, I'll ſwear you ſhall never loſe ſo favourable an Opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together and lock the Door.

[*Exit.*

Sir *Will.* Nay, nay Couſin ——— I have forgot my Gloves,

Gloves, ——— What d'ye do? 'Sheart a'has lock'd the Door indeed, I think ——— Nay, Couſin *Fainall*, open the Door ——— Pſhaw, what a vixon Trick is this? ——— Nay, now a'has ſeen me too ——— Couſin, I made bold to paſs thro' as it were ——— I think this Door's inchanted ———

Milla. [*Repeating.*] *I prithee ſpare me gentle Boy,*
Preſs me no more for that ſlight Toy.

Sir *Will.* Anan? Couſin, your Servant.

Milla. ——— *That fooliſh Trifle of a Heart* ——— Sir *Willfull*!

Sir *Will.* Yes, ——— your Servant. No Offence I hope, Couſin.

Milla. [*Repeating.*]

I ſwear it will not do its Part,
Tho' thou do'ſt thine, employ'ſt thy Power and Art.

Natural, eaſie *Suckling*!

Sir *Will.* Anan? *Suckling*? No ſuch Suckling neither, Couſin, nor Stripling: I thank Heav'n, I'm no Minor.

Milla. Ah Ruſtick! ruder than *Gothick*.

Sir *Will.* Well, well, I ſhall underſtand your *Lingo* one of theſe Days, Couſin, in the mean while I muſt anſwer in plain *Engliſh*.

Milla. Have you any Buſineſs with me, Sir *Willfull*?

Sir *Will.* Not at preſent, Couſin, ——— Yes, I made bold to ſee, to come and know if that how you were diſpos'd to fetch a Walk this Evening, if ſo be that I might not be troubleſome, I would have fought a Walk with you.

Milla. A Walk? What then?

Sir *Will.* Nay nothing — Only for the Walks ſake, that's all ———

Milla. I nauſeate Walking; 'tis a Country Diverſion, I loath the Country and ev'ry thing that relates to it.

Sir

Sir *Will.* Indeed! Hah! Look ye, look ye, you do? Nay, 'tis like you may——Here are choice of Paſtimes here in Town, as Plays and the like, that muſt be confeſs'd indeed——

Milla. Ah l'etourdie! I hate the Town too.

Sir *Will.* Dear Heart, that's much——Hah! that you ſhould hate 'em both! Hah! 'tis like you may; there are ſome can't reliſh the Town, and others can't away with the Country,——'tis like you may be one of thoſe, Couſin.

Milla. Ha, ha, ha. Yes, 'tis like I may.——You have nothing further to ſay to me?

Sir *Will.* Not at preſent, Couſin.——'Tis like when I have an Opportunity to be more private,——I may break my Mind in ſome meaſure,——I conjecture you partly gueſs——However that's as Time ſhall try,——But ſpare to ſpeak and ſpare to ſpeed, as they ſay.

Milla. If it is of no great Importance, Sir *Willfull*, you will oblige me to leave me: *I* have juſt now a little Buſineſs.——

Sir *Will.* Enough, enough, Couſin: Yes, yes, all a caſe——When you're diſpos'd, when you're diſpos'd. Now's as well as another time; and another time as well as now. All's one for that,——Yes, yes, if your Concerns call you, there's no Haſte; it will keep cold as they ſay,——Couſin, your Servant. *I* think this Door's lock'd.

Milla. You may go this way, Sir.

Sir *Will.* Your Servant, then with your Leave *I'll* return to my Company.

[*Exit.*

Milla. Ay, ay; ha, ha, ha.

Like Phœbus ſung the no leſs amorous Boy.

Enter Mirabell.

Mira.——*Like* Daphne *ſhe, as Lovely and as Coy.*

Do you lock your ſelf up from me to make my Search more

more Curious? Or is this pretty Artifice contriv'd, to ſignifie that here the Chace muſt end, and my Purſuit be Crown'd, for you can fly no further.——

Milla. Vanity! No —— *I*'ll fly and be follow'd to the laſt Moment, tho' *I* am upon the very Verge of matrimony, *I* expect you ſhou'd ſollicit me as much as if *I* were wavering at the Grate of a Monaſtery, with one Foot over the Threſhold. *I*'ll be ſollicited to the very laſt, nay and afterwards.

Mira. What, after the laſt?

Milla. O, *I* ſhould think *I* was poor and had nothing to beſtow, If *I* were reduc'd to an inglorious Eaſe; and free'd from the agreeable Fatigues of Sollicitation.

Mira. But do not you know, that when Favours are conferr'd upon inſtant and tedious Sollicitation, that they diminiſh in their Value, and that both the Giver loſes the Grace, and the Receiver leſſens his Pleaſure?

Milla. It may be in Things of common Application; but never ſure in Love. O, *I* hate a Lover, that can dare to think, he draws a moments Air, Independent on the Bounty of his Miſtreſs. There is not ſo impudent a Thing in Nature, as the ſawcy Look of an aſſured man, Confident of Succeſs. The Pedantick Arrogance of a very Husband, has not ſo Pragmatical an Air. Ah! *I*'ll never marry, unleſs *I* am firſt made ſure of my Will and Pleaſure.

Mira. Wou'd you have 'em both before marriage? Or will you be contented with the firſt now, and ſtay for the other 'till after Grace?

Milla. Ah don't be Impertinent——my dear Liberty, ſhall I leave thee? my faithful Solitude, my darling Contemplation, muſt I bid you then Adieu? Ay-h adieu.——— my morning Thoughts, agreeable Wakings, indolent Slumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *Someils du Matin adieu*——I can't do't, 'tis more than impoſſible——Poſitively *Mirabell*, I'll lye a Bed in a Morning as long as I pleaſe.

Mira. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I pleaſe.

Milla.

Milla. Ah! Idle Creature, get up when you will ——And d'ye hear, I won't be call'd Names after I'm Marry'd; poſitively I won't be call'd Names.

Mira. Names!

Milla. Ay as Wife, Spouſe, my Dear, Joy, Jewel, Love, Sweetheart, and the reſt of that Nauſeous Cant, in which Men and their Wives are ſo fulſomely familiar,——I ſhall never bear that,——Good *Mirabell* don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiſs before Folks, like my Lady *Fadler* and Sir *Francis:* Nor go to *Hide-Park* together the firſt *Sunday* in a new Chariot, to provoke Eyes and Whiſpers; And then never to be ſeen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the firſt Week, and aſham'd of one another ever after. Let us never Viſit together, nor go to a Play together, but let us be very ſtrange and well bred: Let us be as ſtrange as if we had been marry'd a great while; and as well bred as if we were not marry'd at all.

Mira. Have you any more Conditions to offer? Hitherto your Demands are pretty reaſonable.

Milla. Trifles,——As Liberty to pay and receive Viſits to and from whom I pleaſe; to write and receive Letters, without Interrogatories or wry Faces on your Part; to wear what I pleaſe; and chuſe Converſation with regard only to my own Taſte; to have no Obligation upon me to converſe with Wits that I don't like, becauſe they are your Acquaintance; or to be intimate with Fools, becauſe they may be your Relations. Come to Dinner when I pleaſe, dine in my dreſſing Room when I'm out of Humour without giving a Reaſon. To have my Cloſet Inviolate; to be ſole Empreſs of my Tea-Table, which you muſt never preſume to approach without firſt asking leave. And laſtly, where-ever I am, you ſhall always knock at the Door before you come in. Theſe Articles ſubſcrib'd, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a Wife.

Mira. Your Bill of Fare is ſomething advanc'd in this latter Account. Well, have I Liberty to offer Conditions——That when you are dwindl'd into a Wife,

Wife, I may not be beyond Measure enlarg'd into a Husband?

Milla. You have free leave; propose your utmost, speak and spare not.

Mira. I thank you. *Imprimis* then, I Covenant that your Acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn Confident, or Intimate of your own Sex; no she Friend to skreen her Affairs under your Countenance, and tempt you to make Trial of a Mutual Secresie. No Decoy-Duck to wheadle you a *fop*——*scrambling* to the Play in a Mask——Then bring you home in a pretended Fright, when you think you shall be found out.——And rail at me for missing the Play, and disappointing the Frolick which you had to pick me up, and prove my Constancy.

Milla. Detestable *Imprimis!* I go to the Play in a Mask!

Mira. Item, I Article, that you continue to like your own Face, as long as I shall. And while it passes Current with me, that you endeavour not to new Coin it. To which end, together with all Vizards for the Day, I prohibit all Masks for the Night, made of oild-skins and I know not what——Hog's-bones, Hare's-gall, Pig-water, and the Marrow of a roasted Cat. In short, I forbid all Commerce with the Gentlewomen in *what-d'ye-call-it*-Court. *Item*, I shut my Doors against all Bauds with Baskets, and penny-worths of *Muslin*, *China*, *Fans*, *Atlasses*, &c.——*Item* when you shall be Breeding,——

Milla. Ah! Name it not.

Mira. Which may be presum'd, with a Blessing on our Endeavours——

Milla. Odious Endeavours!

Mira. I denounce against all strait-Lacing, Squeezing for a Shape, 'till you mould my Boy's Head like a Sugar-loaf; and instead of a man-child, make me the Father to a crooked-billet. Lastly, to the Dominion of the *Tea-Table* I submit.——But with *proviso*, that you exceed not in your Province; but restrain your self to native and simple *Tea-Table* Drinks, as *Tea*, *Chocolate* and *Coffee*. As likewise to Genuine and Authoriz'd

Tea-

Tea-Table Talk, ——Such as mending of Faſhions, ſpoiling Reputations, railing at abſent Friends, and ſo forth —But that on no Account you encroach upon the Mens Prerogative, and preſume to drink Healths, or toaſt Fellows; for prevention of which, I baniſh all *Foreign Forces*, all Auxiliaries to the *Tea-Table*, as *Orange-Brandy*, all *Anniſeed*, *Cinamon*, *Citron* and *Barbado's-Waters*, together with *Ratafia* and the moſt noble Spirit of *Clary*, ——But for *Couſlip-Wine*, *Poppy-Water* and all *Dormitives*, thoſe I allow, ——Theſe *proviſo*'s admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying Husband.

Milla. O horrid *proviſo*'s! filthy ſtrong Waters! I toaſt Fellows, Odious Men! I hate your odious *proviſo*'s.

Mira. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiſs your Hand upon the Contract? and here comes one to be a Witneſs to the Sealing of the Deed.

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Milla. Fainall, what ſhall I do? ſhall I have him? I think I muſt have him.

Mrs. *Fain.* Ay, ay, take him, take him, what ſhou'd you do?

Milla. Well then——I'll take my Death I'm in a horrid Fright——*Fainall*, I ſhall never ſay it——Well——I think——I'll endure you.

Mrs. *Fain.* Fy, fy, have him, have him, and tell him ſo in plain Terms: For I am ſure you have a mind to him.

Milla. Are you? *I* think *I* have——and the horrid Man looks as if he thought ſo too——Well, you ridiculous thing you, *I'll* have you,——*I* won't be kiſs'd, nor I won't be thank'd——Here kiſs my Hand tho'——So hold your Tongue now, and don't ſay a Word.

Mrs. *Fain. Mirabell*, there's a Neceſſity for your Obedience;——You have neither time to talk nor ſtay. My Mother is coming; and in my Conſcience if ſhe ſhou'd ſee you, wou'd fall into Fits, and may be not reco-

recover time enough to Return to Sir *Rowland*, who as *Foible* tells me, is in a fair Way to ſucceed. Therefore ſpare your Extacies for another Occaſion, and ſlip down the back-Stairs, where *Foible* waits to conſult you.

Milla. Ay, go, go. In the mean time I ſuppoſe you have ſaid ſomething to pleaſe me.

Mira. I am all Obedience. [*Exit* Mira.

Mrs. *Fain.* Yonder Sir *Willfull*'s drunk; and ſo noiſie that my Mother has been forc'd to leave Sir *Rowland* to appeaſe him; but he anſwers her only with Singing and Drinking —— what they have done by this time I know not. But *Petulant* and he were upon quarrelling as *I* came by.

Milla. Well, if *Mirabell* ſhou'd not make a good Husband, *I* am a loſt thing; —— for *I* find *I* love him violently.

Mrs. *Fain.* So it ſeems, when you mind not what's ſaid to you. —— If you doubt him, you had beſt take up with Sir *Willfull*.

Milla. How can you name that ſuperannuated Lubber? foh!

Enter Witwoud *from drinking.*

Mrs. *Fain.* So, is the Fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? *I* could ſtay no longer ——— *I* have laugh'd like ten Chriſtnings —— *I* am tipſie with laughing —— *If I* had ſtaid any longer, *I* ſhould have burſt, ——— *I* muſt have been let out and piec'd in the Sides like an unſiz'd Camlet —— Yes, yes, the Fray is compos'd; my Lady came in like a *Noli proſequi*, and ſtopt their Proceedings.

Milla. What was the Diſpute?

Wit. That's the Jeſt, there was no Diſpute, they cou'd neither of 'em ſpeak for Rage; and ſo fell a ſputt'ring at one another like two roaſting Apples.

Enter Petulant *Drunk.*

Now *Petulant*, all's over, all's well; Gad my Head be-

begins to whim it about — Why doſt thou not ſpeak? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a Fiſh.

Pet. Look you, Mrs. *Millamant* — If you can love me, dear Nymph — ſay it — and that's the Concluſion — paſs on, or paſs off, — that's all.

Wit. Thou haſt utter'd *Volumes*, *Folio's*, in leſs than *Decimo Sexto*, my dear *Lacedemonian*, Sirrah *Petulant*, thou art an Epitomizer of Words.

Pet. Witwoud — You are an Annihilator of Senſe.

Wit. Thou art a Retailer of Phraſes; and doſt deal in Remnants of Remnants, like a maker of Pincuſhions — thou art in truth (metaphorically ſpeaking) a Speaker of ſhort-hand.

Pet. Thou art (without a Figure) juſt one half of an Aſs; and *Baldwin* yonder, thy half Brother is the reſt — A *Gemini* of Aſſes ſplit, would make juſt four of you.

Wit. Thou doſt bite, my dear muſtard-ſeed; kiſs me for that.

Pet. Stand off — *I'll* kiſs no more Males, — *I* have kiſs'd your *twin* yonder in a humour of Reconciliation, 'till he *(hiccup)* riſes upon my Stomach like a Radiſh.

Milla. Eh! filthy Creature — what was the Quarrel?

Pet. There was no Quarrel — there might have been a Quarrel.

Wit. If there had been Words enow between 'em to have expreſs'd Provocation, they had gone together by the Ears like a pair of Caſtanets.

Pet. You were the Quarrel.

Milla. Me!

Pet. If *I* have a Humour to quarrel, *I* can make leſs matters conclude Premiſes. — If you are not handſom, what then? If *I* have a Humour to prove it — If *I* ſhall have my Reward, ſay ſo; if not, fight for your Face the next time your ſelf — *I'll* go ſleep.

Wit. Do, wrap thy ſelf up like a *Wood-louſe* and dream Revenge — And hear me, if thou canſt learn to write by to morrow morning, pen me a Challenge — *I'll* carry it for thee.

Pet.

Pet. Carry your Miſtreſs's *Monkey* a *Spider*——— go flea Dogs, and read Romances——I'll go to Be to my Maid. [*Exi*

Mrs. *Fain.* He's horridly drunk——how can you all in this Pickle?

Wit. A Plot, a Plot, to get rid of the Knight,——Your Husband's Advice; but he ſneak'd off.

Enter Lady, and Sir Willfull *drunk.*

Lady. Out upon't, out upon't, at Years of Diſcretion, and comport your ſelf at this Rantipole Rate.

Sir *Will.* No Offence, Aunt.

Lady. Offence? As I'm a Perſon, I'm aſham'd of you——Fogh! how you ſtink of Wine! D'ye think my Neice will ever endure ſuch a *Borachio*! you're an abſolute *Borachio.*

Sir *Will. Borachio!*

Lady. At a time when you ſhou'd commence an Amour, and put your beſt Foot foremoſt——

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart, an you grutch me your Liquor, make a Bill——Give me more Drink, and take my Purſe.

Sings. *Prithee fill me the Glaſs*
'Till it laughs in my Face,
With Ale that is Potent and mellow;
He that whines for a Laſs
Is an ignorant Aſs,
For a Bumper *has not its Fellow.*

But if you wou'd have me marry my Couſin,——ſay the Word, and *I*'ll do't——*Willfull* will do't, that's the Word——*Willfull* will do't, that's my Creſt——my Motto I have forgot.

Lady. My Nephew's a little overtaken, Couſin——but 'tis with drinking your Health——O' my Word you are oblig'd to him.

Sir

Sir *Will.* *In Vino Veritas*, Aunt: ——— *If I* drunk your Health to day, Cousin, ——— *I* am a *Borachio.* But if you have a Mind to be marry'd, say the Word, and send for the Piper, *Willfull* will do't. *If* not, dust it away, and let's have t'other Round ——— *Tony*, Ods-heart where's *Tony* —— *Tony*'s an honest Fellow, but he spits after a Bumper, and that's a Fault.

Sings. *We'll drink and we'll never ha' done Boys,*
Put the Glass then around with the Sun Boys,
Let Apollo's *Example invite us;*
For he's drunk ev'ry Night,
And that makes him so bright
That he's able next Morning to light us.

The Sun's a good Pimple, an honest Soaker, he has a Cellar at your *Antipodes.* *If* I travel, Aunt, *I* touch at your *Antipodes* ——— your *Antipodes* are a good rascally sort of topsie turvy Fellows ——— *If I* had a Bumper *I*'d stand upon my Head and drink a Health to 'em ——— A Match or no Match, Cousin, with the hard Name, ——— Aunt, *Willfull* will do't. If she has her Maidenhead, let her look to't, ——— if she has not, let her keep her own Counsel in the mean time, and try out at the Nine Months End.

Milla. Your Pardon, Madam, I can stay no longer ——— Sir *Willfull* grows very powerful, Egh! how he smells! I shall be overcome if I stay. Come, Cousin.

[*Ex.* Milla. *and Mrs.* Fain.

Lady. Smells! He would poison a Tallow-Chandler and his Family. Beastly Creature, I know not what to do with him. ——— Travel quoth a; ay travel, travel, get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the *Tartars*, or the *Turks* ——— for thou art not fit to live in a Christian Commonwealth, thou beastly Pagan.

Sir *Will.* *Turks*, no; no *Turks*, Aunt: Your *Turks* are Infidels, and believe not in the Grape. Your *Mahometan*, your *Mussulman* is a dry Stinkard ——— No Offence,

Offence, Aunt. My Map ſays that your *Turk* is no ſo honeſt a Man as your Chriſtian ——— *I* cannot find by the Map that your *Mufti* is Orthodox —— Whereby it is a plain Caſe, that Orthodox is a hard Word Aunt, and *(hiccup)* Greek for Claret.

Sings. *To drink is a Chriſtian Diverſion,*
Unknown to the Turk *and the* Perſian:
Let Mahometan *Fools*
Live by Heatheniſh Rules,
And be damn'd over Tea-Cups and Coffee.
But let Britiſh *Lads ſing,*
Crown a Health to the King,
And a Fig for your Sultan *and* Sophy.

Ah, *Tony*!

Enter Foible, *and whiſpers* Lady.

Lady. Sir *Rowland* impatient? Good lack! what ſhall *I* do with this beaſtly Tumbril? ——— Go lye down and ſleep, you Sot ——— Or as *I*'m a Perſon *I*'ll have you baſtinado'd with Broom-ſticks. Call up the Wenches.

[*Exit* Foible.

Sir *Will.* A hey? Wenches, where are the Wenches?

Lady. Dear Couſin *VVitwoud* get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. *I* have an Affair of Moment that invades me with ſome Precipitation —— You'll oblige me to all Futurity.

VVit. Come, Knight ——— Pox on him, *I* don't know what to ſay to him ——— Will you go to a Cock-match?

Sir *VVill.* With a Wench, *Tony*? Is ſhe a ſhake-bag, Sirrah? let me bite your Cheek for that.

VVit. Horrible! He has a Breath like a Bagpipe —— Ay, ay, come will you march my *Salopian*?

Sir *VVill.* Lead on, little *Tony* ——— *I*'ll follow thee my *Anthony*, my *Tantony*, Sirrah thou ſha't be my *Tantony*, and I'll buy thy *Pig*.

——— *And*

——*And a Fig for your* Sultan *and* Sophy.

[*Exit Singing with* Witwoud.

Lady. This will never do. It will never make a Match. —— At leaſt before he has been abroad.

Enter Waitwell, *diſguis'd as for Sir* Rowland.

Dear Sir *Rowland*, I am confounded with Confuſion at the Retroſpection of my own Rudeneſs —— I have more Pardons to ask than the *Pope* diſtributes in the Year of *Jubilee*. But I hope where there is likely to be ſo near an Alliance, —— we may unbend the Severity of *Decorum* —— and diſpenſe with a little Ceremony.

Wait. My Impatience, Madam, is the Effect of my Tranſport; —— and till I have the Poſſeſſion of your adorable Perſon, I am tantaliz'd on the Rack; and do but hang, Madam, on the Tenter of Expectation.

Lady. You have Exceſs of Gallantry, Sir *Rowland*; and preſs things to a Concluſion, with a moſt prevailing Vehemence. —— But a Day or two for Decency of Marriage. ——

Wait. For Decency of Funeral, Madam. The Delay will break my Heart —— or if that ſhould fail I ſhall be Poiſon'd. My Nephew will get an inkling of my Deſigns, and Poiſon me, —— and I would willingly ſtarve him before I die —— I would gladly go out of the World with that Satisfaction. —— That would be ſome Comfort to me, if I could but live ſo long as to be reveng'd on that unnatural Viper.

Lady. Is he ſo Unnatural, ſay you? Truly I would contribute much both to the ſaving of your Life, and the accompliſhment of your Revenge —— Not that I reſpect my ſelf; tho' he has been a perfidious Wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you! ——

Lady. O Sir *Rowland*, the Hours that he has dy'd away

away at my Feet, the Tears that he has ſhed, the Oaths that he has ſworn, the Palpitations that he has felt, the Trances and the Tremblings, the Ardors and the Ecſtacies, the Kneelings and the Riſings, the Heart-heavings and the Hand-gripings, the Pangs and the Pathetick Regards of his proteſting Eyes! Oh no Memory can Regiſter.

Wait. What, my Rival! is the Rebel my Rival? a'dies.

Lady. No, don't kill him at once, Sir *Rowland*, ſtarve him gradually Inch by Inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three Weeks he ſhall be bare-foot; in a Month out at Knees with begging an Alms, ——— he ſhall ſtarve upward and upward, 'till he has nothing living but his Head, and then go out in a Stink like a Candle's End upon a Save-all.

Lady. Well, Sir *Rowland*, you have the way. ——— You are no Novice in the Labyrinth of Love ——— You have the Clue ——— But as I am a Perſon, Sir *Rowland*, you muſt not attribute my yielding to any ſiniſter Appetite, or Indigeſtion of Widow-hood; nor impute my Complacency to any Lethargy of Continence ——— I hope you do not think me prone to any Iteration of Nuptials. ———

Wait. Far be it from me ———

Lady. If you do, I proteſt I muſt recede. ——— or think that I have made a Proſtitution of Decorums, but in the Vehemence of Compaſſion, and to ſave the Life of a Perſon of ſo much Importance ———

Wait. I eſteem it ſo ———

Lady. Or elſe you wrong my Condeſcenſion ———

Wait. I do not, I do not ———

Lady. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair Shrine of Virtue.

Lady. If you think the leaſt Scruple of Carnality was an Ingredient ———

Wait. Dear Madam, no. You are all *Camphire* and *Frankincenſe*, all *Chaſtity* and *Odour*.

Lady. Or that ———

Enter

Enter Foible.

Foib. Madam, the Dancers are ready, and there's one with a Letter, who muſt deliver it into your own Hands.

Lady. Sir *Rowland*, will you give me leave? Think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a Perſon who would ſuffer Racks in Honour's Cauſe, dear Sir *Rowland*, and will wait on you inceſſantly. [*Exit.*

Wait. Fie, fie! ——— What a Slavery have I undergone; Spouſe, haſt thou any *Cordial* ——— I want *Spirits.*

Foib. What a waſhy Rogue art thou, to pant thus for a Quarter of an Hours Lying and Swearing to a fine Lady?

Wait. O ſhe is the Antidote to Deſire. Spouſe thou will't fare the worſe for't ——— I ſhall have no Appetite to Interation of Nuptials ——— this Eight and Forty Hours ——— By this Hand I'd rather be a Chairman in the Dog-days ——— than act Sir *Rowland* 'till this time to morrow.

Enter Lady *with a Letter.*

Lady. Call in the Dancers; ——— Sir *Rowland*, we'll ſit, if you pleaſe, and ſee the Entertainment. [*Dance.*

Now with your Permiſſion, Sir *Rowland*, I will peruſe my Letter ——— I would open it in your Preſence, becauſe I would not make you uneaſie. If it ſhould make you uneaſie I would burn it ——— ſpeak if it does ——— but you may ſee by the Superſcription it is like a Woman's Hand.

Foib. By Heav'n! Mrs. *Marwood's*, I know it, ——— my Heart akes ——— get it from her ——— [*To him.*

Wait. A Woman's Hand? No, Madam, that's no Woman's Hand, I see that already. That's some Body whose Throat must be cut.

Lady. Nay, Sir *Rowland*, since you give me a Proof of your Passion by your Jealousie, I promise you I'll make you a Return, by a frank Communication——— You shall see it——we'll open it together——look you here.

Reads ——*Madam, tho' unknown to you,* [Look you there, 'tis from no Body that I know.] ———*I have that Honour for your Character, that I think my self oblig'd to let you know you are abus'd. He who pretends to be* Sir Rowland *is a Cheat and a Rascal.*———

Oh Heav'ns! what's this?

Foib. Unfortunate, all's ruin'd.

Wait. How, how, let me see, let me see——reading, *A Rascal and disguis'd, and subborn'd for that Imposture,*——O Villany! O Villany!——*by the Countenance of*———

Lady. I shall faint, I shall die, oh!

Foib. Say 'tis your Nephew's Hand.——Quickly, his Plot, swear, swear it.——[*To him.*

Wait. Here's a Villain! Madam, don't you perceive it, don't you see it?

Lady. Too well, too well. I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you at first I knew the Hand——A Woman's Hand? The Rascal writes a sort of a large Hand; your *Roman* Hand——I saw there was a Throat to be cut presently. If he were my Son, as he is my Nephew, I'd Pistol him———

Foib. O Treachery! But are you sure, Sir *Rowland*, it is his Writing?

Wait. Sure? am I here, do I live? do I love this Pearl of *India*? I have Twenty Letters in my Pocket from him, in the same Character.

Lady. How!

Foib.

Foib. O what Luck it is, Sir *Rowland*, that you were preſent at this Juncture! This was the Buſineſs that brought Mr. *Mirabell* diſguis'd to Madam *Millamant* this Afternoon. I thought ſomething was contriving, when he ſtole by me and would have hid his Face.

Lady. How, how! ——— I heard the Villain was in the Houſe indeed, and now I remember, my Niece went away abruptly, when Sir *Willfull* was to have made his Addreſſes.

Foib. Then, then Madam, Mr. *Mirabell* waited for her in her Chamber, but I wou'd not tell your Ladyſhip to diſcompoſe you when you were to receive Sir *Rowland*.

Wait. Enough, his Date is ſhort.

Foib. No, good Sir *Rowland*, don't incur the Law.

Wait. Law! I care not for Law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good Cauſe ——— My Lady ſhall be ſatisfy'd of my Truth and Innocence, tho' it coſt me my Life.

Lady. No, dear Sir *Rowland*, don't fight, if you ſhou'd be kill'd I muſt never ſhew my Face; or hang'd ——— O conſider my Reputation, Sir *Rowland* —— No you ſhan't fight, ——— I'll go in and examine my Niece; I'll make her confeſs. I conjure you Sir *Rowland* by all your Love not to fight.

Wait. I am charm'd Madam, I obey. But ſome Proof you muſt let me give you; ——— I'll go for a black Box, which contains the Writings of my whole Eſtate, and deliver that into your Hands.

Lady. Ay dear Sir *Rowland*, that will be ſome Comfort; bring the Black Box.

Wait. And may I preſume to bring a Contract to be ſign'd this Night? May I hope ſo far?

Lady. Bring what you will; but come alive, pray come alive. O this is a happy Diſcovery.

Wait. Dead or alive I'll come ——— and married we will be in ſpight of Treachery; ay and get an Heir that ſhall defeat the laſt remaining Glimpſe

of Hope in my abandon'd Nephew. Come, my Buxom Widow.

E'er long you shall substantial Proof receive
That I'm an arrant Knight ——

Foib. *Or arrant Knave.*

[*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT V. SCENE I.

[*Scene continues.*]

Enter Lady Wishfort *and* Foible.

Lady. OUT of my House, out of my House, thou *Viper*, thou *Serpent*, that I have foster'd, thou bosom Traitress, that I rais'd from nothing—— Begon, begon, begon, go, go, ——That I took from washing of old Gause and weaving of dead Hair, with a bleak blue Nose, over a Chafing-dish of starv'd Embers, and Dining behind a Traver's Rag, in a Shop no bigger than a Bird-cage, ——go, go, starve again, do, do

Foib. Dear Madam, I'll beg Pardon on my Knees.

Lady. Away, out, out, go set up for your self again ——do, drive a Trade, do, with your Three penny Worth of small Ware, flaunting upon a Packthread, under a Brandy-sellers Bulk, or against a dead Wall by a Ballad-monger. Go, hang out an old *Prisoneer-gorget*, with a Yard of Yellow *Colberteen* again; do; an old gnaw'd Mask, Two Rows of Pins and a Child's Fiddle; A Glass Necklace with the Beads broken, and a Quilted Night-cap with one Ear. Go, go, drive a Trade, —— These were your Commodities, you treacherous Trull, this was your Merchandize you dealt in, when I took you into my House, plac'd you next my self, and made you Governante of my whole Family. You have forgot this, have you? Now you have feather'd your Nest.

Foib. No, no, dear Madam. Do but hear me, have but a moment's Patience —I'll confess all. Mr. *Mirabell* seduc'd me; I am not the first that he has wheadl'd with his dissembling Tongue; Your Ladyship's own Wisdom has been deluded by him, then how shou'd I, a poor Ignorant, defend my self? O Madam, if you knew but what he promis'd me; and

how he assur'd me your Ladyship shou'd come to no Damage—Or else the Wealth of the *Indies* shou'd not have brib'd me to conspire against so Good, so Sweet, so kind a Lady as you have been to me.

Lady. No Damage? What to betray me, to marry me to a Cast-serving-Man; to make me a Receptacle, an Hospital for a decay'd Pimp? No Damage? O thou frontless Impudence, more than a big-belly'd Actress.

Foib. Pray do but hear me Madam, he cou'd not marry your Ladyship, Madam——No indeed his marriage was to have been void in Law; for he was marry'd to me first, to secure your Ladyship. He cou'd not have bedded your Ladyship; for if he had consummated with your Ladyship, he must have run the risque of the Law, and been put upon his Clergy—— Yes indeed, I enquir'd of the Law in that case before I wou'd meddle or make.

Lady. What, then I have been your Property, have I? I have been convenient to you it seems, ——while you were catering for *Mirabell*; I have been Broaker for you? What, have you made a passive Bawd of me? ——this exceeds all Precedent; I am brought to fine Uses, to become a Botcher of second-hand Marriages, between *Abigails* and *Andrews*! I'll couple you. Yes, I'll baste you together, you and your *Philander*. I'll *Duke's-Place* you, as I'm a Person. Your Turtle is in Custody already: You shall Coo in the same Cage, if there be Constable or Warrant in the Parish. [*Exit.*

Foib. O that ever I was born, O that I was ever marry'd, —— a Bride, ay I shall be a *Bridewell*-Bride. Oh!

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. *Fain.* Poor *Foible*, what's the matter?

Foib. O Madam, my Lady's gone for a Constable; I shall be had to a Justice, and put to *Bridewell* to beat Hemp; poor *Waitwell*'s gone to Prison already.

Mrs. *Fain.* Have a good Heart, *Foible*, *Mirabell*'s gone to give Security for him, this is all *Marwood*'s and my Husband's doing.

Foib.

Foib. Yes, yes; I know it, Madam; ſhe was in my Lady's Cloſet, and over-heard all that you ſaid to me before Dinner. She ſent the Letter to my Lady, and that miſſing Effect, Mr. *Fainall* laid this Plot to arreſt *Waitwell*, when he pretended to go for the Papers; and in the mean time Mrs. *Marwood* declar'd all to my Lady.

Mrs. *Fain.* Was there no mention made of me in my Letter? ——— my mother does not ſuſpect my being in the Confederacy? I fancy *Marwood* has not told her, tho' ſhe has told my Husband.

Foib. Yes, Madam; but my Lady did not ſee that Part: We ſtifled the Letter before ſhe read ſo far. Has that miſchievous Devil told Mr. *Fainall* of your Ladyſhip then?

Mrs. *Fain.* Ay, all's out, my Affair with *Mirabell*, every thing diſcover'd. This is the laſt Day of our living together, that's my Comfort.

Foib. Indeed Madam, and ſo 'tis a Comfort if you knew all, ——— he has been even with your Ladyſhip: which I cou'd have told you long enough ſince, but I love to keep Peace and Quietneſs by my good Will: I had rather bring Friends together, than ſet 'em at Diſtance. But Mrs. *Marwood* and he are nearer related than ever their Parents thought for.

Mrs. *Fain.* Say'ſt thou ſo, *Foible*? Canſt thou prove this?

Foib. I can take my Oath of it, Madam, ſo can Mrs. *Mincing*; we have had many a fair Word from Madam *Marwood*, to conceal ſomething that paſs'd in our Chamber one Evening when you were at *Hide-Park*; ——— and we were thought to have gone a Walking: But we went up unawares, ——— tho' we were ſworn to Secreſie too; Madam *Marwood* took a Book and ſwore us upon it: But it was but a Book of Verſes and Poems, ——— So long as it was not a Bible-Oath, we may break it with a ſafe Conſcience.

Mrs. *Fain.* This Diſcovery is the moſt opportune Thing I could wiſh. Now *Mincing*.

Enter Mincing.

Minc. My Lady wou'd ſpeak with Mrs. *Foible*, *Mem.* Mr. *Mirabell* is with her; he has ſet your Spouſe at liberty, Mrs. *Foible*, and wou'd have you hide your ſelf in my Lady's Cloſet, 'till my old Lady's Anger is abated. O, my old Lady is in a perilous Paſſion, at ſomething Mr. *Fainall* has ſaid, he ſwears, and my old Lady cries. There's a fearful Hurricane I vow. He ſays *Mem*; how that he'll have my Lady's Fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorc'd.

Mrs. *Fain.* Does your Lady and *Mirabell* know that?

Minc. Yes *Mem*, they have ſent me to ſee if Sir *Willfull* be ſober, and to bring him to them. My Lady is reſolv'd to have him I think, rather than loſe ſuch a vaſt Sum as Six Thouſand Pound. O, come Mrs. *Foible*, I hear my old Lady.

Mrs. *Fain. Foible*, you muſt tell *Mincing*, that ſhe muſt prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foib. Yes, yes, Madam.

Minc. O yes *Mem*, I'll vouch any thing for your Ladyſhip's Service, be what it will.

[*Exeunt* Minc. *and* Foib.

Enter Lady *and* Marwood.

Lady. O my dear Friend, how can I enumerate the Benefits that I have receiv'd from your Goodneſs? To you I owe the timely Diſcovery of the falſe Vows of *Mirabell*; to you the Detection of the Impoſtor Sir *Rowland*. And now you are become an Interceſſor with my Son-in Law, to ſave the Honour of my Houſe, and compound for the Frailties of my Daughter. Well Friend, You are enough to reconcile me to the bad World, or elſe I would retire to Deſarts and Solitudes; and feed harmleſs Sheep by Groves and purling Streams. Dear *Marwood*, let us leave the World, and retire by our ſelves and be Shepherdeſſes.

Mrs. *Mar.* Let us firſt diſpatch the Affair in hand, Madam,

Madam, we ſhall have Leiſure to think of Retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concern'd in the Treaty.

Lady. O Daughter, Daughter, is it poſſible thou ſhould'ſt be my Child, Bone of my Bone, and Fleſh of my Fleſh, and as I may ſay, another me, and yet tranſgreſs the moſt minute Particle of ſevere Virtue? Is it poſſible you ſhould lean aſide to Iniquity, who have been caſt in the direct Mold of Virtue? I have not only been a Mold but a Pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the World.

Mrs. *Fain.* I don't underſtand your Ladyſhip.

Lady. Not underſtand? Why have you not been Naught? Have you not been Sophiſticated? Not underſtand? Here I am ruin'd to compound for your *Caprices* and your *Cuckoldoms*. I muſt pawn my Plate and my Jewels, and ruin my Neice, and all little enough ——

Mrs. *Fain.* I am wrong'd and abus'd, and ſo are you. 'Tis a falſe Accuſation, as falſe as Hell, as falſe as your Friend there, ay, or your Friend's Friend, my falſe Husband.

Mrs. *Mar.* My Friend, Mrs. *Fainall*? Your Husband my Friend, what do you mean?

Mrs. *Fain.* I know what I mean, Madam, and ſo do you; and ſo ſhall the World at a Time convenient.

Mrs. *Mar.* I am ſorry to ſee you ſo paſſionate, Madam. More Temper would look more like Innocence. But I have done. I am ſorry my Zeal to ſerve your Ladyſhip and Family, ſhould admit of Miſconſtruction, or make me liable to Affronts. You will pardon me, Madam, if I meddle no more with an Affair, in which I am not perſonally concern'd.

Lady. O dear Friend, I am ſo aſham'd that you ſhould meet with ſuch Returns; —— You ought to ask Pardon on your Knees, ungrateful Creature; ſhe deſerves more from you, than all your Life can accompliſh —— O don't leave me deſtitute in this Perplexity; —— No, ſtick to me, my good Genius.

Mrs. *Fain.* I tell you, Madam, you're abus'd ——

Stick to you? ay, like a Leach, to ſuck your beſt Blood —— ſhe'll drop off when ſhe's full. Madam, you ſhan't pawn a Bodkin, nor part with a Braſs Counter, in Compoſition for me. I deſie 'em all Let 'em prove their Aſperſions: I know my own Innocence, and dare ſtand by a Tryal. [*Exit.*

Lady. Why, if ſhe ſhou'd be innocent, if ſhe ſhou'd be wrong'd after all, ha? I don't know what to think, —— and I promiſe you, her Education has been unexceptionable —— I may ſay it; for I chiefly made it my own Care to initiate her very Infancy in the Rudiments of Virtue, and to impreſs upon her tender Years a Young Odium and Averſion to the very Sight of men, ——— ay Friend, ſhe wou'd ha' ſhriek'd if ſhe had but ſeen a man, 'till ſhe was in her Teens. As I'm a Perſon 'tis true — She was never ſuffer'd to play with a Male-Child, tho' but in Coats; Nay her very Babies were of the *Feminine Gender*, —— O, ſhe never look'd a man in the Face but her own Father, or the Chaplain, and him we made a ſhift to put upon her for a Woman, by the help of his long Garments, and his ſleek Face; 'till ſhe was going in her Fifteen.

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Twas much ſhe ſhould be deceiv'd ſo long.

Lady. I warrant you, or ſhe would never have born to have been Catechiz'd by him; and have heard his long Lectures againſt Singing and Dancing, and ſuch Debaucheries; and going to filthy Plays; and prophane Muſick-meetings, where the Lewd Trebles ſqueek nothing but Bawdy, and the Baſes roar Blaſphemy. O, ſhe would have ſwoon'd at the Sight or Name of an obſcene Play-Book ——, and can I think after all this, that my Daughter can be Naught? What, a Whore? And thought it Excommunication to ſet her Foot within the Door of a Play-houſe. O my dear Friend, I can't believe it, no, no; as ſhe ſays, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs *Mar.* Prove it, Madam? What, and have your Name proſtituted in a publick Court; yours and your Daughter's Reputation worry'd at the Bar by a Pack of

of Bawling Lawyers? To be uſher'd in with an *O Yes* of Scandal; and have your Caſe open'd by an old fumbling Leacher in a Quoif like a Man Midwife, to bring your Daughter's Infamy to Light, to be a Theme for legal Puniſters, and Quiblers by the Statute; and become a Jeſt, againſt a Rule of Court, where there is no Precedent for a Jeſt in any Record; not even in *Dooms-Day-Book*: To diſcompoſe the Gravity of the Bench, and provoke naughty Interrogatories in more naughty Law *Latin*; while the good Judge tickl'd with the Proceeding, ſimpers under a Grey Beard, and fidges off and on his Cuſhion as if he had ſwallow'd *Cantharides*, or ſate upon *Cow-Itch*.

Lady. O, 'tis very hard!

Mrs. *Mar.* And then to have my Young Revellers of the *Temple* take Notes, like Prentices at a Conventicle; and after talk it all over again in Commons, or before Drawers in an Eating-Houſe.

Lady. Worſe and worſe.

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay this is nothing; if it would end here 'twere well. But it muſt after this be conſign'd by the Short-hand Writers to the publick Preſs; and from thence be tranſferr'd to the Hands, nay into the Throats and Lungs of Hawkers, with Voices more Licentious than the loud Flounder-man's, or the Woman that cries Grey-Peaſe; and this you muſt hear 'till you are ſtunn'd; nay, you muſt hear nothing elſe for ſome Days.

Lady. O, 'tis inſupportable. No, no, dear Friend, make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll Compound. I'll give up all, my ſelf and my all, my Neice and her all ——any thing, every thing for Compoſition.

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay, Madam, I adviſe nothing, I only lay before you, as a Friend, the Inconveniences which perhaps you have overſeen. Here comes Mr. *Fainall*. If he will be ſatisfy'd to huddle up all in Silence, I ſhall be glad. You muſt think I would rather Congratulate than Condole with you.

Enter

Enter Fainall.

Lady. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear *Marwood*: No, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, Madam; I have ſuffer'd my ſelf to be overcome by the Importunity of this Lady your Friend; and am content you ſhall enjoy your own proper Eſtate during Life; on Condition you oblige your ſelf never to Marry, under ſuch Penalty as I think convenient.

Lady. Never to Marry?

Fain. No more Sir *Rowlands*, ——the next Impoſture may not be ſo timely detected.

Mrs. *Mar.* That Condition, I dare anſwer, my Lady will conſent to, without Difficulty; ſhe has already but too much experienc'd the Perfidiouſneſs of Men. Beſides, Madam, when we retire to our Paſtoral Solitude we ſhall bid adieu to all other Thoughts.

Lady. Ay, that's true; but in Caſe of Neceſſity; as of Health, or ſome ſuch Emergency ——

Fain. O, if you are preſcrib'd Marriage, you ſhall be conſider'd; I will only reſerve to my ſelf the Power to chuſe for you. If your Phyſick be wholſome, it matters not who is your Apothecary. Next, my Wife ſhall ſettle on me the Remainder of her Fortune, not made over already; and for her Maintenance depend entirely on my Diſcretion.

Lady. This is moſt inhumanly Savage; exceeding the Barbarity of a *Muſcovite* Husband.

Fain. I learn'd it from his *Czariſh* Majeſty's Retinue, in a Winter Evening's Conference over Brandy and Pepper, amongſt other Secrets of Matrimony and Policy, as they are at preſent Practis'd in the Northern Hemiſphere. But this muſt be agreed unto, and that poſitively. Laſtly, I will be endow'd in right of my Wife, with that Six Thouſand Pound, which is the Moiety of Mrs. *Millamant*'s Fortune in your Poſſeſſion: And which ſhe has forfeited (as will appear by the laſt Will and Teſtament of your deceas'd Husband, Sir *Jonathan Wiſtfort*) by her Diſobedience in Contracting her

her ſelf againſt your Conſent or Knowledge; and by refuſing the offer'd Match with Sir *Willfull Witwoud*, which you, like a careful Aunt, had provided for her.

Lady. My Nephew was *non Compos*; and could not make his Addreſſes.

Fain. I come to make Demands,——I'll hear no Objections.

Lady. You will grant me Time to conſider.

Fain. Yes, while the Inſtrument is drawing, to which you muſt ſet your Hand 'till more ſufficient Deeds can be perfected, which I will take care ſhall be done with all poſſible ſpeed. In the mean while, I will go for the ſaid Inſtrument, and 'till my Return you may ballance this matter in your own Diſcretion.

[*Exit* Fain.

Lady. This Inſolence is beyond all Precedent, all Parallel; muſt I be ſubject to this mercileſs Villain?

Mrs. *Mar.* 'Tis ſevere indeed, Madam, that you ſhould ſmart for your Daughter's Wantonneſs.

Lady. 'Twas againſt my Conſent that ſhe marry'd this Barbarian, but ſhe would have him, tho' her Year was not out.—Ah! her firſt Husband, my Son *Languiſh*, would not have carry'd it thus. Well, that was my Choice, this is hers; ſhe is match'd now with a Witneſs——I ſhall be mad, dear Friend, is there no Comfort for me? Muſt I live to be confiſcated at this Rebel rate?——Here come two more of my *Egyptian* Plagues too.

Enter Millamant *and Sir* Willfull.

Sir *Will.* Aunt, your Servant.

Lady. Out *Caterpillar*, call not me Aunt; I know thee not.

Sir *Will.* I confeſs I have been a little in Diſguiſe, as they ſay,——'Sheart! and I'm ſorry for't. What would you have? I hope I committed no Offence, Aunt——and if I did I am willing to make Satisfaction; and what can a man ſay fairer? If I have broke any thing I'll pay for't, an it coſt a Pound. And ſo

ſo let that content for what's paſt, and make no more Words. For what's to come, to pleaſure you I'm willing to marry my Couſin. So pray let's all be Friends, ſhe and I are agreed upon the Matter before a Witneſs.

Lady. How's this, dear Neice? Have I any Comfort? Can this be true?

Milla. I am content to be a Sacrifice to your Repoſe, Madam; and to convince you that I had no Hand in the Plot, as you were miſinform'd, I have laid my Commands on *Mirabell* to come in Perſon, and be a Witneſs that I give my Hand to this Flower of *Knighthood*; and for the Contract that paſs'd between *Mirabell* and me, I have oblig'd him to make a Reſignation of it in your Ladyſhip's Preſence; —— He is without, and waits your leave for Admittance.

Lady. Well, I'll ſwear I am ſomething reviv'd at this Teſtimony of your Obedience; but I cannot admit that Traitor, —— I fear I cannot fortifie my ſelf to ſupport his Appearance. He is as terrible to me as a *Gorgon*; if I ſee him I fear I ſhall turn to Stone, petrifie inceſſantly.

Milla. If you diſoblige him he may reſent your Refuſal, and inſiſt upon the Contract ſtill. Then 'tis the laſt time he will be offenſive to you.

Lady. Are you ſure it will be the laſt time? —— If I were ſure of that —— ſhall I never ſee him again?

Milla Sir *Willfull*, you and he are to Travel together, are you not?

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart the Gentleman's a civil Gentleman, Aunt, let him come in; why we are ſworn Brothers and Fellow-Travellers. —— We are to be *Pylades* and *Oreſtes*, he and I —— He is to be my Interpreter in Foreign Parts. He has been Over-ſeas once already; and with *proviſo* that I marry my Couſin, will croſs 'em once again, only to bear me Company. —— 'Sheart, I'll call him in, —— an I ſet on't once, he ſhall come in; and ſee who'll hinder him. [*Exit.*

Mrs. *May.* This is precious Fooling, if it would paſs, but I'll know the Bottom of it.

Lady.

Lady. O dear *Marwood*, you are not going?

Mar. Not far, Madam; I'll return immediately [*Exit.*

Re-enter Sir Willfull *and* Mirabell.

Sir *Will.* Look up, Man, I'll ſtand by you, 'sbud an ſhe do frown, ſhe can't kill you; —— Beſides —— harkee ſhe dare not frown deſperately, becauſe her Face is none of her own; 'Sheart and ſhe ſhou'd her Forehead wou'd wrinkle like the Coat of a Cream-cheeſe, but mum for that, Fellow-Traveller.

Mira. If a deep ſenſe of the many Injuries I have offer'd to ſo good a Lady, with a ſincere Remorſe, and a hearty Contrition, can but obtain the leaſt Glance of Compaſſion, I am too happy, ——— Ah Madam, there was a time —— But let it be forgotten - —— I confeſs I have deſervedly forfeited the high Place I once held, of ſighing at your Feet; nay kill me not, by turning from me in Diſdain, ——I come not to plead for Favour; ——Nay not for Pardon, I am a Suppliant only for your Pity —— I am going where I never ſhall behold you more——

Sir *Will.* How, Fellow-Traveller! —— You ſhall go by your ſelf then.

Mira. Let me be pitied firſt; and afterwards forgotten —— I ask no more.

Sir *Will.* By'r Lady a very reaſonable Requeſt; and will coſt you nothing. Aunt —— Come, come, forgive and forget Aunt, why you muſt an you are a Chriſtian.

Mira. Conſider Madam, in reality, you cou'd not receive much Prejudice; it was an Innocent Device; tho' I confeſs it had a Face of Guiltineſs, ——It was at moſt an Artifice which Love contriv'd - ——And Errors which Love produces have ever been accounted *Venial*. At leaſt think it is Puniſhment enough, that I have loſt what in my Heart I hold moſt dear, that to your cruel Indignation, I have offer'd up this Beauty, and with her my Peace and Quiet; nay all my Hopes of future Comfort.

Sir

Sir *Will.* An he do's not move me, wou'd I might never be *O' the Quorum* —— An it were not as good a Deed as to drink, to give her to him again, ——— I wou'd I might never take Shipping. —— Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly; I shall melt, I can tell you that. My Contract went no further than a little Mouth-Glew, and that's hardly dry; —— One doleful Sigh more from my Fellow-Traveller and 'tis diſſolv'd.

Lady. Well Nephew, upon your Account —— Ah, he has a falſe Inſinuating Tongue —— Well Sir, I will ſtifle my juſt Reſentment at my Nephew's Requeſt. —— I will endeavour what I can to forget, ——— but on *proviſo* that you reſign the Contract with my Neice immediately.

Mira. It is in Writing and with Papers of Concern; but I have ſent my Servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all Acknowledgments for your tranſcendent Goodneſs.

Lady. Oh, he has Witchcraft in his Eyes and Tongue; —— When I did not ſee him I could have brib'd a Villain to his Aſſaſſination; but his Appearance rakes the Embers which have ſo long lain ſmother'd in my Breaſt. —— [*Apart.*]

Enter Fainall *and Mrs.* Marwood.

Fain. Your Date of Deliberation, Madam, is expir'd. Here is the Inſtrument, are you prepar'd to ſign?

Lady. If I were prepar'd, I am not impower'd. My Neice exerts a lawful Claim, having match'd her ſelf by my Direction to Sir *Willfull.*

Fain. That Sham is too groſs to paſs on me —— tho' 'tis impos'd on you, Madam.

Milla. Sir, I have given my Conſent.

Mira. And, Sir, I have reſign'd my Pretenſions.

Sir *Will.* And, Sir, I aſſert my Right; and will maintain it in defiance of you Sir, and of your Inſtrument. S'heart an you talk of an Inſtrument. Sir, I have an old Fox by my Thigh ſhall hack your Inſtrument of *Ram Vellum* to Shreds, Sir. It ſhall not be ſuf-

ſufficient for a *Mittimus* or a Tailor's Meaſure; therefore withdraw your Inſtrument Sir, or by'r Lady I ſhall draw mine.

Lady. Hold, Nephew, hold.

Milla. Good Sir *Willfull* reſpite your Valour.

Fain. Indeed? Are you provided of your Guard, with your ſingle Beef-eater there? But I'm prepared for you; and inſiſt upon my firſt Propoſal. You ſhall ſubmit your own Eſtate to my Management, and abſolutely make over my Wife's to my ſole Uſe; as purſuant to the Purport and Tenor of this other Covenant. ——— I ſuppoſe, Madam your Conſent is not requiſite in this Caſe; nor, Mr. *Mirabell*, your Reſignation; nor, Sir *Willfull*, your Right ——— You may draw your Fox if you pleaſe Sir, and make a *Bear Garden* flouriſh ſomewhere elſe: For here it will not avail. This, my Lady *Wiſhfort*, muſt be ſubſcrib'd, or your Darling Daughter's turn'd a drift, like a leaky Hulk, to ſink or ſwim, as ſhe and the Current of this lewd Town can agree.

Lady. Is there no Means, no Remedy, to ſtop my Ruin? Ungrateful Wretch! doſt thou not owe thy Being, thy Subſiſtance to my Daughter's Fortune?

Fain. I'll anſwer you when I have the reſt of it in my Poſſeſſion.

Mira. But that you wou'd not accept of a Remedy from my Hands ——— I own I have not deſerv'd you ſhou'd owe any Obligation to me; or elſe perhaps I cou'd adviſe, ———

Lady. O what? what? To ſave me and my Child from Ruin, from Want, I'll forgive all that's paſt; nay I'll conſent to any Thing to come, to be deliver'd from this Tyranny.

Mira. Ay Madam; but that is too late, my Reward is intercepted. You have diſpos'd of her, who only cou'd have made me a Compenſation for all my Services; ——— But be it as it may. I am reſolv'd I'll ſerve you, you ſhall not be wrong'd in this Savage Manner.

Lady. How! Dear Mr. *Mirabell*, can you be ſo generous

rous at last! But it is not possible. Harkee, I'll break my Nephew's Match, you shall have my Neice yet, and all her Fortune; if you can but save me from this imminent Danger.

Mira. Will you? I take you at your Word. I ask no more. I must have leave for Two Criminals to appear.

Lady. Ay, ay, any body, any body.

Mira. Foible is one, and a Penitent.

Enter Mrs. Fainall, Foible, *and* Mincing.

Mrs. *Mar.* O my Shame! these corrupt things are bought and brought hither to expose me. [*to* Fain.

[Mira. *and Lady go to Mrs* Fain. *and* Foib.

Fain. If it must all come out, why let 'em know it, 'tis but the *Way of the World.* That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one Tittle of my Terms, no, I will insist the more.

Foib. Yes indeed Madam; I'll take my Bible-oath of it.

Minc. And so will I *Mem.*

Lady. O *Marwood*, *Marwood*, art thou false? my Friend deceive me? Hast thou been a wicked Accomplice with that profligate Man?

Mrs. *Mar.* Have you so much Ingratitude and Injustice, to give Credit against your Friend, to the Aspersions of Two such mercenary Trulls?

Minc. Mercenary, *Mem*? I scorn your Words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr. *Fainall* in the blue Garret; by the same Token, you swore us to Secresie upon *Messalina*'s Poems. Mercenary? No, if we wou'd have been Mercenary, we shou'd have held our Tongues; You wou'd have brib'd us sufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an Insignificant thing.——— Well, what are you the better for this! Is this Mr. *Mirabell*'s Expedient? I'll be put off no longer——— You thing that was a Wife, shall smart for this. I will not leave thee wherewithall to hide thy Shame: Your Body shall be Naked as your Reputation.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Fain.* I deſpiſe you, and defie your Malice ——— You have aſpers'd me wrongfully ——— I have prov'd your Falſhood ——— Go you and your treacherous ——— I will not name it, but ſtarve together ——— Periſh.

Fain. Not while you are worth a Groat, indeed my Dear. Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer.

Lady. Ah Mr. *Mirabell*, this is ſmall Comfort, the Detection of this Affair.

Mira. O in good time ——— Your Leave for the other Offender and Penitent to appear, Madam.

Enter Waitwell *with a Box of Writings.*

Lady O Sir *Rowland* ——— Well, Raſcal.

Wait. What your Ladyſhip pleaſes. ——— I have brought the Black Box at laſt, Madam.

Mira. Give it me. Madam, you remember your Promiſe.

Lady. I, dear Sir!

Mira. Where are the Gentlemen?

Wait. At hand Sir, rubbing their Eyes, ——— Juſt riſen from Sleep.

Fain. S'death what's this to me? I'll not wait your private Concerns.

Enter Petulant *and* Witwoud.

Pet. How now? What's the matter? Whoſe Hand's out?

Wit. Hey day! what are you all got together, like Players at the End of the laſt Act?

Mira. You may remember, Gentlemen, I once requeſted your Hands as Witneſſes to a certain Parchment.

Wit. Ay I do, my Hand I remember ——— *Petulant* ſet his Mark.

Mira. You wrong him, his Name is fairly written, as ſhall appear ——— You do not remember, Gentlemen, any thing of what that Parchment contain'd ———

[*Undoing the Box.*

Wit.

Wit. No.

Pet. Not I. I writ, I read nothing.

Mira. Very well, now you shall know——Madam your Promise.

Lady. Ay, ay, Sir upon my Honour.

Mira. Mr. *Fainall*, it is now Time that you shou'd know, that your Lady, while she was at her own Disposal, and before you had by your Insinuations wheadl'd her out of a pretended Settlement of the greatest Part of her Fortune——

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mira. Yes, Sir. I say that this Lady while a Widow, having it seems receiv'd some Cautions respecting your Inconstancy and Tyranny of Temper, which from her own partial Opinion and Fondness of you she cou'd never have suspected——she did, I say, by the wholesome Advice of Friends and of Sages learn'd in the Laws of this Land, deliver this same as her Act and Deed to me in Trust, and to the Uses within mention'd. You may read if you please——[*Holding out the Parchment.*] tho' perhaps what is inscrib'd on the Back may serve your Occasions.

Fain. Very likely, Sir. What's here? Damnation!

[*Reads.*] *A Deed of Conveyance of the whole Estate real of* Arabella Languish, *Widow, in Trust to* Edward Mirabell.

Confusion!

Mira. Even so, Sir; 'tis *the Way of the World*, Sir; of the Widows of the World. I suppose this Deed may bear an elder Date than what you have obtain'd from your Lady.

Fain. Perfidious Fiend! then thus I'll be reveng'd.—

[*Offers to run at Mrs.* Fainall.

Sir *Will.* Hold, Sir, now you may make your *Bear Garden* Flourish somewhere else, Sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, Sir, be sure you shall.——Let me pass, Oaf.

[*Exit* Mrs.

Mrs. *Fain.* Madam, you ſeem to ſtifle your Reſentment: You had better give it Vent.

Mrs. *Mar.* Yes, it ſhall have Vent—— and to your Confuſion, or I'll periſh in the Attempt, [*Exit.*

Lady. O Daughter, Daughter, 'tis plain thou haſt inherited thy Mother's Prudence.

Mrs. *Fain.* Thank Mr. *Mirabell*, a cautious Friend, to whoſe Advice all is owing.

Lady. Well Mr. *Mirabell*, you have kept your Promiſe ——— and I muſt perform mine. ——— Firſt pardon for your ſake Sir *Rowland* there and *Foible*, —— The next thing is to break the Matter to my Nephew —— and how to do that ——

Mira. For that, Madam, give your ſelf no Trouble —— let me have your Conſent —— Sir *Willfull* is my Friend; he has had Compaſſion upon Lovers, and generouſly engag'd a Volunteer in this Action, for our Service, and now deſigns to proſecute his Travels.

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart, Aunt, I have no mind to marry. My Couſin's a fine Lady, and the Gentleman loves her and ſhe loves him, and they deſerve one another; my Reſolution is to ſee Foreign Parts ——— I have ſet on't ——— and when I'm ſet on't, I muſt do't. And if theſe two Gentlemen wou'd travel too, I think they may be ſpar'd.

Pet. For my part, I ſay little —— I think things are beſt off or on.

Wit. I gad I underſtand nothing of the Matter, —— I'm in a Maze yet, like a Dog in a Dancing School.

Lady. Well Sir, take her, and with her all the Joy I can give you.

Milla. Why does not the Man take me? Wou'd you have me give my ſelf to you over again?

Mira. Ay, and over and over again; [*Kiſſes her Hand.*] I would have you as often as poſſibly I can. Well, Heav'n grant I love you not too well, that's all my Fear.

Sir *Will.* 'Sheart you'll have him time enough to toy after you're marry'd; or if you will toy now, let us

us have a Dance in the mean time, that we who are not Lovers may have some other Employment, beside looking on.

Mira. With all my Heart, dear Sir *Willfull*; what shall we do for Musick?

Foib. O Sir, some that were provided for Sir *Rowland*'s Entertainment are yet within Call.

[*A Dance.*

Lady. As I am a Person I can hold out no longer ——I have wasted my Spirits so to Day already, that I am ready to sink under the Fatigue; and I cannot but have some Fears upon me yet, that my Son *Fainall* will pursue some desperate Course.

Mira. Madam, disquiet not your self on that Account; to my Knowledge his Circumstances are such, he must of Force comply. For my part I will contribute all that in me lies to a Reunion: In the mean time, Madam, [*To Mrs* Fain.] let me before these Witnesses restore to you this Deed of Trust; it may be Means, well manag'd, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warn'd, who mean to wed;
Left mutual Falshood stain the Bridal-Bed:
For each Deceiver to his Cost may find,
That Marriage Frauds too oft are paid in kind.

[Exeunt Omnes.

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